THE INTERPRETATION OF HISTORY

MAX NORDAU

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By

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CHAPTER I

HISTORY AND THE WRITING OF HISTORY

THE confusion almost everywhere prevalent between history and the writing of history will be firmly avoided in the course of the subsequent inquiry. The philosophy of history, even in the hands of its most distinguished exponents, has tended far too much to identify the object of description and the description itself. There is something almost ludicrous in the unconscious arrogance of this. The lordly declaration of the historian, "History is that portion of the world's story which is established by tradition and recorded in written history,"[1] is prompted by the confident self-importance of the bureaucrat, who cries, "quod non est in actis, non est in mundo!"

The ancients were wiser when they admitted that there had been heroes before Agamemnon, although—

> "illacrimabiles
> Urgentur ignotique longa
> Nocte, carent quia vate sacro"—

[1] Ferdinand Erhardt, "The Sphere of History: Problems of Historical Research," Berne, 1906, p. 4. Even so clear a thinker as P. Lacombe ("De l'Histoire considérée comme Science," Paris, 1894) gives this narrow definition: "History is all *that we know* of the doings of our ancestors" (italics are mine).

eternal night holds them, unwept and unhonoured, because unsung by the bard; or, as Sadi in Gulistan declares:

> "Many a hero now forgotten sleepeth quiet underground,
> And upon the earth no echoes of his glory ever sound."

Friedrich Schiller had none of the arrogance of his followers, or of their desire for self-glorification. He did not hold that nothing is history but what is represented by the historian. On the contrary, in his "What is Universal History, and why should it be studied?" he says: "The historian selects from this mass of occurrences those which have had a direct influence, and one which can readily be traced, upon the present aspect of the world and the condition of the generations living at this day." This limitation, borrowed by Schiller from Kant,[1] appears at first sight to be illuminating, but closer examination hardly justifies it.

Schiller himself recognizes that a "long series of causally interconnected events can be traced from the present moment to the origin of the human species." How, then, can anyone presume to make an arbitrary selection among these countless causes of which effects continue to be operative in the most recent development? Why should those occurrences only be selected which

[1] Emmanuel Kant, collected works, edited by G. Hartenstein, Leipzig, 1867, vol. iv., "Idea of a Universal History from the International Point of View," p. 157: "They (our descendants) will doubtless only value the history of ancient times, whose records must have long since disappeared, in the light of what really interests them—namely, the good or harm done by nations and governments from the international point of view."

"have exercised an influence which can readily be traced" upon the present aspect of the world and the condition of the generations alive to-day? Is an influence less direct and important when it can be traced, not with ease, but with great difficulty? A superficial view of any human event will suggest visible causes which are hardly ever the real ones.[1] The forces which determine events are often deeply hidden: the most penetrating insight and laborious investigation is necessary before they and their interrelation can be discovered. Knowledge which stops short at "the occurrences which have exercised an influence which can readily be traced upon the present aspect of the world" may ac-

[1] To avoid breaking the thread of my argument, I will give some concrete examples in this note. Popular accounts of the movement for North American independence place its beginning on December 16, 1773, with the attack on the tea-ships in Boston harbour, and describe it as being caused by the English stamp and Custom dues. Édouard Laboulaye ("Histoire Politique des États Unis," Paris, 1855) occupies nearly 200 pages (vol. ii., pp. 1-186) in showing that the beginnings of the secession of the United States coincide with the beginning of the English settlement itself. George Bancroft ("History of the United States," Boston, 1852) takes the same view. Vols. iv.-vi. deal with "The American Revolution," the beginning of which he puts as far back as 1748. Bancroft does not reach the attack on the tea-ships till p. 487 of vol. vi. The latest historian of the North American Revolution, Mary A. M. Marks ("England and America, 1763-1783: the History of a Reaction"), dates its beginning as 1763, finds its causes in the strife of parties in England, and concludes: "The history of the loss of America is the history of a Tory reaction."

Wolfgang Menzel ("The Last 120 Years of Universal History," Stuttgart, 1860, vol. ii., p. 1) begins his account of the French Revolution thus: "The greatest event of modern times, the French Revolution, began on the day on which . . . the long-desired meeting of the States-General was opened by Louis XVI." On the other hand, Louis Blanc writes in his "Histoire de la Révolution

count for such a view of history as Scribe expresses in his "Verre d'Eau," or Pascal,[1] when he declares that the history of the world would have been different had Cleopatra's nose been of a different shape. No doubt our sympathy is principally, if not exclusively, aroused by something whose relation to "the present aspect of the world and the condition of the generation living at this day" can be easily seen. But how nebulous is the conception of history which this criterion affords us! According to it, what was history for the past generation is no longer so for us, and what is history for us will be so no longer for the generation succeeding. What was history to the Indians and Japanese has never existed for

Française," Paris, 1847, vol. i., Preamble: "History begins and ends nowhere. The facts which compose a world process are so confused and so obscurely connected that there is no event of which the first cause or final result can be stated with certainty. . . . How, then, can the real starting-point of the French Revolution be established?" He begins, therefore, with John Hus, and does not reach until p. 258, vol. ii., the summoning of the States-General, which Menzel regarded as the beginning of the Revolution.

Maxime du Camp ("Souvenirs de l'Armée," Paris, 1848, pp. 65 *et seq.*) ascribes the origin of the February revolution to the fact that Sergeant Giacomoni, of the 14th Line Infantry Regiment, took upon himself to have a man shot, apparently a painter's model, who had tried to hit the captain of his battalion in the face with a torch.

It is regarded as an irrefutable fact by many French publicists that the war of 1870 was caused by the "forgery" introduced by Bismarck into King William's despatch regarding his interview with Count Benedetti.

The sinking of the *Maine* in the harbour of Havana is cited as the cause of the Spanish-American War, etc.

[1] Blaise Pascal, "Lettres Provinciales et Pensées," new edition, Paris, 1821, vol. ii., p. 155: "If Cleopatra's nose had been shorter, the whole face of the earth would have been different."

Europeans and Americans, and *vice versa*. History, then, changes with place and time. The chapters that are greeted with universal excitement to-day will be as stale to-morrow as the novel which is read one day by all the world, only to be cast into the waste-paper basket on the next. It wanders through the darkness of the past like a man with a lantern. There is a dim circle of light around it, moving as it moves from place to place. As it passes on, darkness falls upon the spot that was brightly lit up yesterday, and what it now illumines will to-morrow again be plunged in gloom.

Since the caprice, or call it personality, of the historian will decide the manner in which he treats, limits, and selects his material, and this according to the definition laid down by historians in a body, is history itself, we logically arrive at the droll conclusion that the writer of history creates it! The historian, and not heroes or peoples, creates it! What a great man is this historian! Those who toil at the loom of time sink into insignificance in comparison with the man who stands behind, looking on more or less attentively, and recording their labours more or less correctly. History ceases to be a series of objective events in regular progression, whether that progression be intelligible and capable of a clear and comprehensible description or not, and becomes dependent on the cast of a mind of a particular human being who selects from the mass of recorded material what suits his interests, gratifies his feelings, and falls in with his peculiar aspirations; its arrangement depends on his understanding, and its form on his artistic ability. In one word, history has no longer an objective, but merely a subjective existence; and yet Ranke speaks of wishing

"to extinguish his Self," in order to display the naked reality of things. Well might Georg Simmel[1] remark: "The gratification of Ranke's wish to extinguish his Self in order to see facts in themselves would destroy the success which he imagined that he would gain by it. Self once extinguished, there would be nothing left to observe the Not-Self." I would add, that nothing would be left to feel the sympathy with human beings and their deeds which is the impulse to any description of historical events. The personality of the historian governs all historical narration, Ranke's included—speaks in and through it in the effort to impress itself upon the reader. Let us quote once more the settled verdict of antiquity. The ancients felt, no doubt, that the writing of history was an art, not a science, aiming not at truth, but beauty, and assigned to it therefore an æsthetic value only.[2]

In its early Herodotean origins, history was a form of story-telling, distinguished from Epos only, if at all, by

[1] Georg Simmel, "Problems of the Philosophy of History: a Scientific Study," Leipzig, 1892, p. 18.

[2] Aristotle, "Poetics," chap. ix.: "Poetry is more philosophical and useful than history." Theodor Mommsen ("Roman History," Berlin, 1885, p. 5) admits that "fancy is the mother of history, as of all poetry," and thereby recognizes the blood relationship of the two—a remarkable admission on the part of an investigator who was at such pains to present history to the world in the light of a scientific activity. The admission has, however, become a commonplace with historians, who constantly repeat it, as, to take the most recent example, A. F. Pollard ("Factors in Modern History," London, 1907, p. 1): "I make no apology for placing imagination in the forefront of all the qualifications indispensable for the student and teacher of history. . . . Probably it includes fact as well as fiction, and signifies the power of realizing things unseen."

its prose form;[1] and to-day, despite all its claims to rank among the sciences, despite its wordy, painful efforts to pass as a child of truth, its real affinities are with the novel. The only difference between the historian and the novelist is that the invention of the former is limited in regard to the facts of which a recognized version is current. He cannot arbitrarily contradict what is accepted by the majority as established: but the play of his imagination is uncontrolled in all save the few directions that are enclosed by indisputable records. There is no exaggeration in saying that history as it is written is a kind of *roman à thèse* novel,[2] generally consciously, more rarely unconsciously. To speak of a science of history is to play with a term whose meaning cannot be arbitrarily altered. Science, in the most limited and only correct meaning of the word, is simply the knowledge of the causal connection of phenomena, and of the universal natural laws which they express. It is true that the word is used in a wider sense to cover the descriptive sciences, which confine themselves, in the lack of any mental nexus between concrete facts, to observing them

[1] E. Vacherot, "La Science et la Conscience," Paris, 1870, p. 94: "In the hands of the ancient authors history is amusing and moral, rather than historical." P. 96: "Livy's fabulous tales of the origin of Rome only need the genius, language, and songs of ancient Greece to make them a real poem, like the 'Iliad.'" P. 100: "Quintus Curtius has tried to make the history of Alexander a heroic poem in soaring and flowery prose." P. 103: "Ancient history is always more or less epic and dramatic, an inexhaustible source of pleasure and feeling," etc. Quintilian, "De Instit. Orat.," ii. 4, says naïvely: "Graecis historis plerumque poetico similis esse licentia." Not only "Graecis"!

[2] For more complete treatment and establishment of this idea, see my "Contemporary Frenchmen," Berlin, 1901, pp. 19 *et seq.*

as exactly as possible, and arranging them according to external resemblances for the sake of convenience. Yet Herbert Spencer, for example, deprecated as untrustworthy the use of the word science for such a mere catalogue and arrangement of bare empiric facts. Now history is not a science in the strict sense. Success may for the moment appear to crown the efforts of the philosophic historian to trace a causal connection between events, and lay down laws governing their progress; but criticism makes short work of theories so hatched and dogmatic assertions without any facts behind them. Nor is it a descriptive science. The events it registers are forever withdrawn from actual observation, examination, and experiment, and nothing can be re-established from the traces and records that are left, or from the testimony of human witnesses, except by the assistance of the subjective factor in guessing at conclusions, interpreting, and rounding off.[1]

Inaccuracy of description need only be mentioned, in the second place, as a less essential objection. History is never successful in conceiving events and setting them down exactly as they took place. It is superfluous to recall the innumerable hackneyed anecdotes of the impossibility of acquiring from the various accounts of eye-witnesses an irrefutable picture of any event whatsoever. Possibly in the comparatively near future the developed methods of observing and recording facts, the increased use of the phonograph and the snapshot,

[1] H. v. Humboldt, "The Task of the Historian," Proceedings of the Royal Academy of Sciences, Berlin, for the years 1820-21, Berlin, 1822, p. 305: "Thus no more truth is to be ascribed to the facts of history than to the results of tradition and investigation."

may enable us to obtain an objective record of that aspect of phenomena visible to the senses which will be definite and incontrovertible.

But even so the gain will not be very great. The aspect of history which is represented by concrete events is far the least important. That which is great and vital, the drama of the human soul, is completely hidden from direct observation. The historian's task, according to Maurenbrecher, is to study the inner life of the actors in events, and give an account of their motives and aims. Let him devote himself to this task, by all means; but what likelihood is there that he will solve it correctly? Knowledge of what is in the heart of a man is, according to the Bible, reserved to God alone. The maxim of the ancients, "know thyself," is, in fact, the recognition that to do so is difficult, wellnigh impossible. The secret of a man's personality is often hidden from his own inward view, and impenetrable to that of an outsider. No one who has the least suspicion of the complexity of a highly differentiated intellectual life will attempt to penetrate the inner processes of thought, the underlying motives of action, and lay bare the ramifications that interpenetrate the bedrock of character, temperament, and the subconscious life of man, the alluvial deposits of his life's experience, and the mysteries of the attractions and repulsions that sway him. The historian has to deal with psychology in the concrete, with supposition and conjecture, not science: he is a creative poet whose characterization may be illuminating and convincing like that of the novelist or the playwright, without any assurance that it thereby resembles the truth. Every historian, even of the most moderate

gifts, tends to conceive the great figures of the past and the present after a fashion of his own, different from that of his fellows. Wallenstein is far from being a unique instance of a character "whose portrait wavers" (Schiller) in history. Seldom, indeed, save in the case of persons wholly or semi fabulous, who are not really known at all, or known only through a single author, is there any unanimity of judgment or delineation. Confusion comes as soon as the sources of information are more abundant, until inaccuracies, contradictions, and subjective interpolations hide the true physiognomy of the person who is described, even from the sharpest critic.[1]

Anyone who has sufficiently emerged from obscurity to arouse even the most transitory interest on the part of his contemporaries will throw up his hands in amazement over the judgments passed upon him, his personality and his influence, and over the personal impressions he has made on different minds; and the more important the individual, the wider the circle of observations that he excites, and the greater the number of busybodies who feel called upon to express an opinion about him, the more striking is the distortion which his image undergoes. The incapacity of most people to see others as they are, or to understand them, is only equalled by the impudent assurance with which they give utterance to their senseless and superficial judgments upon them, judgments often hatefully stupid and unjust.

[1] K. Lamprecht, "Old and New Tendencies in the Science of History," Berlin, 1896, p. 18: "The history of persons is always romantic in character, because the inner motives are beyond our knowledge" —a remarkable admission from a historian, and one to be remembered.

Let a historian even venture to record the events of the present or very recent past, and he finds himself assailed by passionate objections, not all inspired by party feelings, by a storm of justification not confined to those concerned in their concealment of truths painful to their vanity or interest. The excited opposition called forth by the German histories of Tritetschke and Sybel, Justin McCarthy's "History of Our Own Times," Kinglake's "History of the Crimean War," Thiers' "History of the Revolution and the Empire," Louis Blanc's "History of the July Monarchy," and Gabriel Hanotaux' "History of the Third Republic," may be recalled.[1] What is depressing is that this arid controversy seldom contributes to real enlightenment on the points in dispute: it issues finally only in the setting up of one assertion and one opinion against another. Certainly no such storm was roused by Grote, Mommsen, or Maspero. At the most, some unexpected inscriptions will roguishly emerge and scatter to the winds pages or even whole sections of their narrative. But

[1] Apart from polemical articles in newspapers and magazines, see, among others: against Thiers' character of Napoleon, Barni, "Napoléon Ier et son Historien, M. Thiers," Paris, 1869, also Lanfrey and Taine: against Sybel's account of the effect of Sadowa on the French Government, Émile Ollivier, "L'Empire Libéral," vol. viii., "L'Année Fatale," Paris, 1906.

It may be noted, by way of example, that Livy's patriotism prevented him from mentioning the conquest of Rome by Porsenna, with which he was familiar; and that Grote, in his "History of Greece," vol. ii., pp. 216, 217, relates that the early English historians, from Hardyng and Monmouth to Holinshed and Milton, recorded the descent of the English Kings from Brutus and Julius Cæsar, and that, when later students suppressed this account as fabulous, they were accused on that ground of want of patriotism—even of crime.

Alcibiades and Themistocles, Marius and Sulla, Rameses and Psammetichus, hold their peace whatever is said of them. They are wise. Could they express an opinion, they would, like the living, utterly fail to recognize themselves in the pictures drawn by their historians.

Objective truth is as inaccessible to the writers of history as is Kant's "Thing in Itself" to human knowledge. For the events of the past he has to rely upon official records, which even the most cautious and well-informed criticism cannot wholly clear of the colouring given them by the desire to conceal unpleasing facts, or upon the circumstantial evidence and the testimony of eye-witnesses whose unreliability is the only certain thing about them. At the best, his representation of character is an embodiment of psychological guesses that may or may not be fortunate. The attempt to discern the causal connection of events and the laws that regulate them is often merely arbitrary, and frequently quite capricious. Written history can never compass the actual event. It is not science, but literature: a branch of fiction, good, bad, or indifferent; a supposition as to the way in which things might have happened; an attempt to show the way in which they ought to have happened, or to prove that they did, as a matter of fact, happen in this or that way; a subjective intuition on the part of men who have to depend on vague, uncertain, or even inadequate information; who are, consciously or unconsciously, influenced by certain tendencies, and led away by their own feelings, prejudices, sympathies, and antipathies, even where they are honest, which is not always the case.

Carlyle was a historian, but he did not hesitate to describe his own profession in the most contemptuous terms:[1] "Alas, what mountains of dead ashes, wreck, and burnt bones, does assiduous Pedantry dig up from the Past Time, and name it History and Philosophy of History . . . and over your Historical Library it is as if all the Titans had written for themselves: 'Dry rubbish shot here'!"

It is as superficial, as unreasonable to identify history as it is and history as it is written as to confound the processes of Nature with the delusions of the human senses.

History has its own existence, different, apart from, and transcending written history, before which it was, which it called into being, and which awkwardly tries to follow it. History in the widest sense is the sum of the episodes of the human struggle for existence. The definition hardly needs explanation. History, it implies, is the record of all, great and small, that man has done and suffered, all that he has thought, imagined, and achieved within the limits of that natural and artificial environment into which he was born, in which he has to live, and by which any satisfaction of his needs and impulses is conditioned. Between the dreary existence of the most obscure and miserable creature upon earth and the triumphal progress of a world conqueror there is no essential difference. In each the same psychophysical forces are at work; each is determined by the same natural laws. The fate of the one is of interest to no one in the wide world save himself; his departure is

[1] Carlyle, "Past and Present," London (Ward, Lock and Co.), no date, p. 36.

as unnoticed as his entrance: the other is a ruler of men, whose thoughts and actions dominate the lives of thousands—nay, millions—of his fellow-creatures. Yet the difference between them is quantitative, not qualitative. Mankind is instinctively aware of this essential equality of all human individualities and their destinies, whether they be such as enter into the purview of the historian, or such as for him possess no significance, or, it may be, are merely creatures of the imagination. Any character, whether real or imaginary, great or small, that is so described that we feel the impress of his reality, can enter into the circumstances of his life, share intimately in his thoughts and feelings, joys and sorrows, fills as important a place in our minds and memories as any hero of world-wide renown. Alexander the Great is perhaps no better known and no more admired than Robinson Crusoe; many a mighty general or statesman might envy the fame of the wandering scholar Thomas Platter, or Knight Hans von Schweinichen. The immortality of Samuel Johnson does not rest on his works, in which the present generation finds small pleasure, but on the insight into every detail of the man and his daily existence given us by the faithful Boswell. Julie, Ophelia, Jane Eyre, Virginia, Manon Lescaut are nearer to the mind and heart of posterity than Cleopatra, Agrippina, or Queen Anne. A creation like Goethe's Wilhelm Meister, or Gottfried Keller's Poor Henry, which the seeing eye of genius has lent the vivid touch of individuality, and placed before us as a man, is as unforgettable as any historical character whatsoever. Across the memory of the human race past events flit like shadows; no fixed boundaries separate the real from

the imaginary. Howsoever powerful a great man's influence may have been on his contemporaries and immediate successors, it seldom lasts a hundred, never a thousand, years, and for posterity he is but one among the myriad causes, near and remote, that have each played their indistinguishable part in creation, without possessing any immediate significance in themselves. With the loss of their direct influence, there passes even from the men who have really lived and have made history that which distinguishes them alike from the great mass of average mankind, who live unknown, and leave no mark behind them, and from the creations of the poetic imagination, than whom they become not more interesting but less, if their human personality have not been made real to us by the artistic methods with which history proper has nothing to do.[1]

I have defined history as the sum of the episodes that make up man's struggle for existence. In it, therefore, is included not only the combatant man, but the foes with which he has unceasingly to struggle—that is, not only his human competitors for the conditions of existence, but Nature herself. The play of the world forces, whether regular, as they normally are, or convulsive, as upon occasion, are as much a part of history as the course of man's efforts to assert and maintain himself against all other powers.

There is a recent historical school that concerns itself solely with spiritual and moral forces in history, and

[1] P. Lacombe, "De l'Histoire considérée comme Science," Paris, 1894, Introduction, p. cxii: "The artistic historian has, as his first aim, to stir the feelings, even if his method be that of actuality. . . . My objection to him is that he brings in narratives and considerations that have, or pretend to have, a scientific character."

conceives it as the conflict, triumph, defeat, and mutual adjustment of human wills, leaving altogether on one side, as unimportant and worthy only of a casual notice, any events that have not been completed in human thought or feeling before being translated into act. It tends to despise the old chroniclers,[1] who faithfully devote the same space to recording dearths, earthquakes, and floods, hail-storms, unusual cold in winter or heat in summer, and the appearances of comets, that they gave to wars, coronations, and the deaths of princes, thus assigning the same importance to events resulting from the operation of human will and those originating in the blind chance over which man has no control. This contempt is misplaced. The modesty of the honest old chroniclers is more consonant with the true function of the historian than the lofty confidence of those modern adepts who arrogate to themselves the decision as to what is and what is not important on the wide stream of the processes of the universe, of nature, and of human life.

The purely natural events that are entirely outside the action of the human will have had a greater influence on the destiny, not only of individuals, groups, or nations, but of human existence as a whole, than the whole range of what is assumed by historians to be essential and important—than the foundation of states, the establishment of religions, the rise and development of social institutions, the conceptions of law and property, con-

[1] All the Renaissance historians modestly call their histories "Chronica"—*e.g.*, to name only those of the sixteenth century, Cario, Cluverius, Gamerus, Genebrard, Kupferschmied, Macker, and Neander.

stitutional and metaphysical ideas. An ice age of some thousand years' duration, following upon a considerable period of temperate warmth, will more completely transform all human conditions than any possible action of a man or a people. Even a local disturbance may cause changes within a limited area of time and space at least as great as any efforts of human will and energy. If the disappearance of Atlantis be no fiction, but a fact, is it not a fact far more significant for humanity than any State formation to which history devotes volumes —nay, libraries? Has not the separation of England from the mainland, established by geology, had far greater political consequences than the Norman Invasion under William the Conqueror—consequences that at the close of thousands of years are far from being exhausted? The Great Flood recorded in the history of nearly every people, the earthquakes that destroyed Lisbon in 1755, San Francisco in 1903, the fires that laid London in ashes in 1666, Chicago in 1874, have been far more destructive of human life than most of the sieges, battles, and campaigns described at such length in history.

There is no historical justification for any such antithesis of intellectual and natural forces, of human will and chance. Any line of distinction must be arbitrary, any separation artificial. The boundary between history and the philosophy of history is crossed when any attempt is made to select among the forces which have determined, and do still determine, human destiny, one which is regarded as essential, and to neglect the rest. History aims at the description of events; the philosophy of history claims to understand their causal connection

and their meaning. No sound conclusions can be reached by a dualistic philosophy of history which refuses to recognize the same natural forces and laws at work everywhere, causing islands and whole continents to disappear beneath or rise above the ocean, and calling forth individual men to be conquerors and lawgivers, to mould and model nations, or which turns away its gaze from the irrational accidents of lifeless matter and closes its eyes to all but spiritual forces.[1] Who can say what would have happened if the Armada had conquered England? Europe, at any rate, would not have been what it is to-day; and the cause of the difference between what it is to-day and what it might have been is surely the storm that destroyed the Armada—a mere accident, a blind natural force that could by no stretch of language be described as spiritual or moral. How would history have developed supposing that Grouchy had marched on Waterloo, and so decided the battle, which after midday stood even, in Napoleon's favour? Was it blind chance or Grouchy's will that decided it otherwise?

It is impossible, when looking at the course of history, to distinguish what is due to the influence of natural events and what to that of human will, unless we wilfully and without any rational justification leave aside or neglect one whole aspect of things. The naïve chronicler may be open to the charge of artlessly string-

[1] Georg Simmel, "Problems of the Philosophy of History," Leipzig, 1892, p. 1: "If history is to be more than a puppet-show, it must record psychic processes." Yes, but does Simmel prove that we are not the puppets of the forces at work in nature? He assumes that which has to be proved—namely, that man makes his history, instead of its being made by nature through him.

ing together, after the manner of a gossiping village barber, odd fragments of information that mean nothing to the reader of another age or place. At the same time it must not be forgotten that the pretentious historian, who presents the results of his critical research as a contribution to science, and considers his style like an artist, does, by the very fact of selection, introduce into his matter a philosophical tendency which belongs to him, and not to it. The objection to Zola's theory of naturalism in fiction is valid against the writer who selects the human will as the only motive-power of importance in history. Zola claimed to give a complete representation of actual life as it is. It was pointed out that, as a matter of fact, he selected by subjective inclination, with reference to an end subjectively conceived, a few aspects of actuality, which he then linked together as it suited him, and interpreted in accordance with his own idea. Thus, history at the moment when it thinks itself most objective is merely naturalistic fiction, merely "history through the medium of a temperament,"[1] with the handicap that the action of temperament in altering and blurring lines is far more fatal on the complicated and

[1] This passage had long been written when the same idea was expressed, almost in the same words, by Professor Gabriel Monod, in an address which he gave on the occasion of his forty years' jubilee as teacher of history at the École des Hautes Études in Paris, May 26, 1907. "Zola," he said, "has defined Art as Nature through the medium of a temperament. . . . We see historical actuality through a temperament also. We study it as history. But if we wish to re-animate it, a personal creative effort is necessary in the representation, and the reinforcement of science by art. Historical actuality is never known to us in all the complexity of its exact and unconditional truth. . . . It is a dream-face." The correspondence is so remarkable as to be worth noting.

crowded canvas of history than in the simple portraiture of the novelist.

History is not a descriptive science, because it has no means by which phenomena can be immediately perceived or objectively determined. Far less, when it is absolutely impossible for it to foretell a single event with even approximate certainty, can it be called an exact science, of which the distinguishing mark is precisely this power to determine beforehand what under certain conditions must happen. It is driven on to seek to know the laws of which phenomena are the manifestation—immutable laws, the same to-day, to-morrow, yesterday.[1] Froude[2] held that history cannot foretell events that depend upon the will of man, because that will is free. But this freedom of the will is a dogma incapable of proof. The law of causality which governs our thought admits of no metaphysical vagueness. It compels us to assume that the will, a force that initiates movement, is, like every other force, subject to that law. Its apparent

[1] Hume (sect. 2, part ii.) demands an eschatology of all sciences. St. Simon also remarks that it is the task of all sciences "to see in order to foresee" (*voir, pour prévoir*), and Condorcet felt this so strongly that, in the last book of his "Esquisse d'un Tableau Historique du Progrès de l'Esprit Humain," he boldly attempts to forecast future history, declaring: "If man can almost confidently foretell natural phenomena, as soon as he knows their laws . . . why should it appear chimerical to represent the probable destiny of the human race side by side with historical results?" P. S. L. Buchez ("Introduction à la Science de l'Histoire," second edition, Paris, 1812, book i., chap. ii.) maintains with Condorcet that history can foresee and foretell, and is thus a science. What a pity that he was so modest as to refrain from foreseeing and foretelling a single event!

[2] James Anthony Froude, "Short Studies on Great Subjects," London, 1867, vol. i., p. 11.

freedom is an illusion, due to the fact that the mind does not perceive the relation between the stimulus to an act of will and the resultant operation of the will. Each act of will is the one possible response of a given organism to a given stimulus under given conditions. A difference in one element in the system, a different constitution of the organism, a different kind of strength of stimulus, or its application under different circumstances, will cause the response of the will to be different, but nothing else can alter it. Conversely, the elements are not the result of chance or arbitrary attraction; they are links in the iron chain of cause and effect that extends into infinity, above and below the limits of our knowledge. Deny this, and you deny causality, and declare that the planets are not strictly determined in their course by mechanical necessity, but can move at will in or out of their appointed track. The thoughts and actions of men are regulated by the same compulsion that keeps the stars in their course, and were history a science like astronomy, even though the behaviour of the elements might remain hidden, it would at least be able to foretell the actions of men and that part of history which depends upon the operation of human will, just as astronomy is able to foretell the movements of the heavenly bodies.

An historian who confines himself to the sober speech of fact, and restrains his "seething brain" and his "eye in a fine frenzy rolling," can only venture upon prophecies so general and so much of the nature of platitudes that they rouse no interest at all. It is safe to foretell that no human institution can last for ever, that every State, every society, every law, every custom, must in time alter or disappear. We all know or guess so much.

History cannot give us even the smallest reliable indication as to the things about which we should really like to know—namely, when and how the existing order is to terminate, and what is to take its place. Any would-be astrologer or cheiromant who had nothing more to tell those who came to him to have the veil of the future withdrawn than that they must one day die, would soon be labelled ass or knave by the most credulous of his clients. In one word, nothing can be foretold of the course of human life, whether of individuals, groups, or communities, beyond the universal law of elementary biological necessity, to which no exception is known—the law which is itself only a particular instance of the complex interrelation and interaction of biological and cosmic laws whose concrete operations we are completely unable to forecast, ignorant as we are of the extent and action of the forces at work in human life. The historian has been paradoxically described as the prophet of the past. It is one of those phrases that suggest meaning without really conveying any. If it does mean anything, it can only be this: the historian is no man of science, but a seer who guesses or divines, not the future, but the past, and if you don't believe him, down with your shilling.

History may have no scientific value, though it is said to be a means of education: *historia magistra vitæ*. Even this claim cannot be substantiated. Written history does not touch the realities of history; it hardly even skims over its extreme surface. It can only search, guess, surmise. But without accurate knowledge there can be no useful instruction. Moreover, the information conveyed, even if accurate, could be of no use to those

who have new actions before them. Every moment in history is the result of a relation between the forces in operation and the general conditions under which they operate, and the combination can never be either repeated or modified. Therefore, it is of no assistance to a man living now to know how certain people acted under given circumstances in the past. The circumstances are not the same; and even if he wished to imitate the action, he could not. Were he to make some clumsy attempt, the result would not be identical. As a matter of fact, no single person or group of persons has ever allowed their action to be determined by historical precedent. In forming a resolution, the determining factor is the necessity of the present, not the experience of the past. The only way in which more or less accurate historical knowledge does operate is seen in the case where one generation transmits to another a prejudice, an attraction or repulsion, a confidence or mistrust, an appreciation or depreciation, that may have originally been sound, and has not been discovered by the descendant to be so no longer. In this case knowledge in the ancestor creates ignorance in the descendant, and gives rise to conclusions that are false, because based on premises no longer accurate. The great conquerors, rulers, and law givers have never possessed what is called the historical sense: that they had it not was the condition of their success. Their eyes, troubled by no visions of the past, were fixed on the visible present. With no thought for what had stirred the men of bygone days, they saw the needs and opportunities of the present. History was never their teacher.

As a matter of fact, the mass of mankind have no real

—no organic, if I may use the word—interest in historical narrative or in history itself. They have a deep-seated impulse to observe, to study, and as far as possible to understand nature, to use all their available knowledge to interpret her. Long before they have consciously reflected, they are dimly aware that knowledge is their best weapon, both of attack and defence, in the life-and-death struggle they have to wage with her; that the wages of ignorance here are death, and the rewards of every advance in knowledge are greater security, a longer tenure, and better conditions of existence. They cherish such cognizance as they have won, and transmit it as their most precious possession to their descendants. The mystic tales of forgotten secrets possessed by the ancient Egyptians, Chaldees, Indians, and Aztecs, represent, no doubt, some branch of nature knowledge acquired at one time and again lost. The play of nature's mighty forces, the phenomena revealed once or periodically in a perplexing whirl of movement, rouse in man an excitement that lasts from childhood to old age, a noble curiosity that compels all save the weak in intellect, the man who is a morbid exception, to gaze and to try to understand. No such instinctive desire for knowledge exists in the case of his own past. The vast majority even of educated people are completely indifferent to it. They never think of it. They are at no pains to remember it. If they consulted their personal inclinations, they would never either burden their own memories with it, or assign any importance to burdening the memories of their descendants.

Every now and then the papers contain the results of the examination of soldiers in history; and they invari-

ably prove that people are either completely ignorant, even of quite recent events, or that they have a ridiculously false conception of them. Italians of this generation know neither Cavour nor Garibaldi.[1] Germans have never heard the name of Moltke or Roon, think that Bismarck was a great ruler or general, and are absolutely ignorant of the war of 1870. Frenchmen know nothing of Gambetta or Thiers, of Sedan, or the revolution that followed it, and believe the most mythical and ridiculous stories about Napoleon.[2] And these are mostly young persons who have learned at least to read and write in their passage through the elementary school, and could very easily instruct themselves in any subject that they found attractive or interesting. Experience proves that the very greatest historical event retains a real and vivid place in human memory only so long as there are men living who took part in it, who were personally affected by it, who watched it with keen interest and excitement themselves, or who have heard tell of it from someone who himself took part in or witnessed it—men, in a word, to whom the event was directly or indirectly part of their own experience. This applies to all great events, and limits their remembrance to three generations at the most—contemporaries, their children, who catch from the lips of their parents something of the force and freshness that belongs to the sight of one's own eyes, and perhaps the third generation,

[1] Paola Lombroso, "Mario Carrara, Nella Penombra della Civiltà (Da un' inchiesta sul pensiero del popolo)," Torino, 1906, pp. 47 *et seq.*

[2] Roland, "L'Éducation Patriotique du Soldat," Paris, 1908, *passim.*

who may, if they are lucky, hear the story at the family board of "I have heard my father tell . . ." But the tale loses so much of its colour in this second relation that the impression it makes on the hearer is slight—too slight to impel him to transmit it to his chil in his turn. The limitation of remembrance to three generations is, in fact, a law based upon the actual processes of memory. Under normal healthy conditions only a revival of the associations or emotions that originally accompanied an impression will call it up again to the surface of consciousness. As a rule however, strong emotion is only aroused and a chain of associations set going by the immediate individual sense-stimulus and prompt reaction of consciousness and will that is present in a personal experience; no such effect is produced by the mere hearing and reading of words, which as often as not fail to suggest to the average dull and lethargic intelligence the ideas into which they require to be translated. The account of a past event with no immediate practical bearing awakens no emotion, starts no manifold and diversified chain of associations: a more or less isolated fact in consciousness, it is soon forgotten, and has little prospect of ever being revived again in the form of a recollection.

The law of three generations applies to events connected with a place, a tribe, or a species, and to the history of the family also, which should be of the first and greatest interest to men of any degree of intellectual development. Civilized man—savages can for the moment be left out of account—normally knows nothing of his ancestors farther back than his grandparents. Beyond three generations all is obscurity, even under

the most favourable circumstances, when a family has remained fixed in one spot, has lived and moved and had its being in the same surroundings, and might find in the unchanging names of everything around it, whether the work of man or nature, in the buildings and the countryside, so many mnemonic aids to memory. If the family change its dwelling, even a recent past will vanish more quickly and completely with the disappearance of the landmarks and images that to some extent helped to keep it alive. At the best, an uncertain, wavering legend, with no distinct features, is all that then remains of the ancestral story. On the journey of life, man travels within a little circle of light that is extinguished with him, and leaves no trace behind it save a dazzling of the eyes of some fellow-traveller. Outside this circle all is eternal darkness, broken only here and there by scattered sparks—a darkness that few care to try to illuminate.

To this stern law of oblivion an exception seems to be afforded by certain great festival days in commemoration of important historical events yearly celebrated after thousands of years by the whole population of a locality or country. Rome still keeps as a festal day April 21, on which day it is naïvely assumed that the city was founded 2,660 years ago (753 B.C.). For four and a half centuries Basle has celebrated St. James's Day (August 26); every 9th of May Orleans recalls its deliverance from the English besiegers by Joan of Arc (1429); and England remembers on November 5 the failure of Guy Fawkes' Gunpowder Plot, etc. But such remembrance is an illusion. The populace celebrate a festival without thinking much of its origin. Out of thousands of Eng-

lish boys who dance round Guy Fawkes' bonfire, hardly a hundred know anything about him. They sing away—

> "Remember, remember
> The fifth of November,"

but would be hard put to it to explain why the day should be remembered. In the course of the last century the custom has grown of establishing State celebrations on historical days, in which the population, willy-nilly, must take part, since the law prescribes it, and it is done by all public offices and institutions. In Germany there is Sedan Day, in France July 14, in Italy Constitution Day, etc. But, recent as is the establishment of most of these celebrations, their origins are already becoming dim. In the schools, teachers impress the significance of Sedan Day upon the minds of their pupils by the writing of essays; and not without reason, for there are plenty of grown-up people to whom the name of Sedan conveys very little distinct meaning. Few of the countless multitudes who conscientiously celebrate the French national festal day, drink, dance, and enjoy the fireworks and illuminations, know anything about the storming of the Bastille; and there are numbers of Italians to whom no definite idea is suggested by "lo Statuto." The masses enjoy the jollification: they like to have it organized and patronized by the classes. The occasion matters little: to them the carnival, the saturnalia, is the thing. What appears to the cultured minority as a historical reminder is to the majority, in spite of their board-school education, no different from any other spiritual or temporal holiday. It is in records,

and not in the consciousness of man, that the historical part is preserved. Only in this sense is there a grain of truth in that arrogant assertion that "History is that portion of the world's story which is established by tradition, and recorded in written history." History goes on, whether recorded or no; whether its recollection by man is artificially preserved or allowed to fall into natural oblivion. Such knowledge as we possess is due solely to those witnesses of events who, instead of relying solely upon oral transmission, have preserved their experiences by writing and other arts. Without such aid the most civilized nations, who have attained the highest intellectual and scientific development, would remember as little of their own history as the rude barbarians, from whom even the immediate past is shrouded in impenetrable darkness.

The almost organic indifference of mankind to the past, to whatever lies outside the range of their immediate sense perception and apprehension, is an observed fact that it is vain to attempt to argue away. It seems, however, to be contradicted by the equally incontrovertible fact of the existence of history in a highly developed form, regarded as a necessary element in a cultured education, and claiming the attention of governments, societies, and countless individuals in the investigation and preservation of the recorded past. The contradiction is more apparent than real. A knowledge of history, unlike that of Nature and her laws, is not a biological necessity: it is a psychological, and, above all, a sociological need.

The individual, psychological basis upon which the origin and continued development of history rests is two-

fold, depending on two fundamental human attributes—curiosity and self-love.

The origin of curiosity is the demand of the nerve-centres for impressions that must of necessity proceed from the external world. This demand, at first instinctive and accompanied in its satisfaction by a certain pleasure, acquires *pari passu* with the development of the organism the element of purpose: the impressions to be received from the external world must be such as anticipate danger, and assist in the provision of nourishment and other gratifications. In the struggle for existence active curiosity is an advantage to the individual: it is the way of enlightenment. As differentiation advances, curiosity, which was directed to the mediately or immediately practical needs of the individual, forgets its origin in the functional requirements of the nerve-centres, and its purpose as alleviating the struggle for existence, and becomes that desire to know which, apparently severed from all selfish aims, strives solely for the attainment of new knowledge and the comprehension of the world of phenomena presented to its view.[1] And the individual whose curiosity has thus risen to the desire

[1] Hermann Lotze ("Microcosm: Idea of a Natural History and History of Mankind: an Anthropological Essay," Leipzig, 1864, vol. iii., p. 3) is well aware of the meaning of curiosity, and continues that it is quite wrong to speak contemptuously of the "restlessness of vulgar curiosity," which, "without any sense of the different importance of different questions, tries to invent a history of the origin of every fact of experience, great or small." But he relapses into his usual mysticism when he goes on: "Yet it is from this vulgar curiosity that there was developed the profound longing to see this riddle of the universe, which is the history of the earth, emerge wholly from the higher world, and return thither when it has completed the task for which it was sent forth."

to know is made uncomfortable and uneasy by every gap in his knowledge of the phenomena before him and of their causal connection. Just as a wild beast is terrified by a dark cavern difficult of access in his hunting-ground, and regards it as a mysterious danger until he has gathered the courage to penetrate to its depths, so man cannot rest until he fills up his gaps with solid masonry or hides them behind some painted screen. To the individual who has once risen to the desire to know, the darkness of the past is as troubling as that of the future, and the question of remote causes as torturing as that of those near at hand. In this desire to know and to understand lies the origin of all sciences, and of all superstitions and other systems of self-deception and false guesses. Philosophic speculation, seeking to find the final cause, resolved itself for most men into the theological revelation which reveals nothing to the understanding. The theory of knowledge investigates the contents of our consciousness reduced to their simplest terms, and endeavors to discover their origin. Prophecy, magic, and the other black arts that strive to penetrate the darkness of the future, seemed for long to the keenest and most mature intellects of the race to represent the brightest branch of human knowledge.[1] It is only necessary to

[1] R. Campbell Thompson, "Late Babylonian Letters," London, 1907. Letter of the King of Assyria to Saduna, in Borsippe. He advises him especially to take possession of the clay tablets in the temple at Ezidda, with war prophecies inscribed on them: "If there be any charm I have not taught thee, and thou shouldst hear of it, search it out, and take and send to me." The importance attributed to the Sibylline books in Rome may be recalled. Compare also Æschylus, "Prometheus Vinctus," vers. 500 *et seq.*, where Prometheus, citing the benefits he has conferred on man, mentions

recall the importance attached by Romans and Etruscans to the omens from the flight of birds and the inspection of their entrails in all State and religious observances; and in the East to the interpretation of dreams down to much more recent times. But the very eagerness of their desire to obtain foreknowledge of the future led men to subject the results of the would-be art of prophecy to such a severe examination as soon showed them to be mere twaddle, without so much as a kernel of truth. Cicero tells us that, late in antiquity, the augur, or haruspex, had come to be regarded as a comic figure. Thoughtful men sadly admitted that means for the reliable investigation of the future did not exist, and that this search, like that for the final cause, must be regretfully abandoned. Thus, only the intellectually backward and absolutely uneducated sections of the populace continued to believe in the primitive forms of revelation by lines on the hand, the interpretation of dreams, laying out of cards, astrology, the shapes in lead or coffee-grounds. Yet the irresistible desire to know the unknowable lingers among the educated too. It is seen in the tentative eschatology which philosophy has even yet not wholly renounced and in the delight with which a speculative forecast like Wells' "Anticipations" is accepted by hundreds of thousands of people, who do not seem aware that the reason why such a speculation affords them so much pleasure is simply that it corresponds ex-

as very important that he taught him to interpret dreams, understand signs, and foretell the future by magic arts:

> "τρόπους τε πολλοὺς μαντικῆς ἐστοιχίσα
> κἄκρινα πρῶτος ἐξ ὀνειράτων ἃ χρή
> ὕπαρ, γενέσθαι, κληδόνας τε δυσκρίτους
> ἐγνώρισ' αὐτοῖς ἐνοδίους τε συμβόλους" etc.

actly with the knowledge, the assumption, the intentions and wishes of the present day, and in so far is a representation, not of the future, but of the present.

The light which was turned upon the future also threw its weak and flickering beams across the darkness of the past. The practical value attaching to a knowledge of the future undoubtedly led men to busy themselves with it before they turned to the past. Magicians and soothsayers existed everywhere long before chroniclers and historians, and even to this day many races still living in a state of primitive barbarism, who care little or nothing about their traditions, are deeply interested in prophecy. But the desire to know threw, in the course of time, a more or less distinct light on one section after another of the whole circle of darkness around us, and so came in turn to try to penetrate the unknown sections of the past as it had tried to penetrate the future. It brooded over the questions that Milton put in Adam's mouth: "How came I thus, how here?" Imagination laid hold of the witnesses to the past, existing in the shape of uncertain recollections, confused and contradictory traditions; monuments, such as buildings, carvings, tombs, furniture, or, in later times, inscriptions, coins, and records; and uncritically filled up all the gaps by the arbitrary exercise of its creative faculty. From such materials there have gradually developed connected narratives, in which the little that is certain, much that is probable, and far more that is only possible or frankly invented,[1] are so blended and welded together that not

[1] Wilhelm v. Humboldt ("The Task of the Historian," Proceedings of the Royal Academy of Sciences, Berlin, for the years 1820-21, Berlin, 1822, Historico-Philological Section, p. 305) admits this.

only the hearer, but even the relator, ceases to be aware of the different parts of which his fable is composed, or to see where they join. The critical sense is very slightly developed in the majority of mankind. They have not the capacity, and hardly the wish, to distinguish between truth and delusion. Any confident assertion they accept without asking for proofs or criticizing their soundness. No assertion is ever doubted, mistrusted, or denied, unless it either happens to be in glaring contradiction to something already well known or to injure someone's feelings and interests, especially in the latter case; otherwise, so long as it contains in itself no inherent impossibilities, it is accepted at once, and occupies the position in consciousness of an accepted fact. As theology taught men the final causes in the universe, and soothsayers explained the secrets of the future from signs, history solved the riddles of the past. Fundamentally it belongs to the same class as these two; its means are as incapable as theirs to satisfy man's desire for knowledge. Even now the great majority of mankind unhesitatingly accept the teachings of theology as to the origin of the universe, because, since they have no particular personal interest in not being deceived as to final causes, beyond a general curiosity, any explanation is as good as another. Most men of any power of thought at all ceased to believe in soothsayers when their forecasts did not come true. But the fact that history is to this day for the most part just as much in the air, just such a tissue of

almost naïvely: "The past is only partly visible in the world of the senses; part must be felt, resolved, guessed at. . . . It may seem questionable to allow the spheres of the historian and the poet to touch at any point. But it cannot be denied that their activities are related."

guess-work, intuition, masked wishes and desires as theology and prophecy is concealed from all save a very small minority, because it is only rarely that facts appear which definitely prove the falsity of any historical narrative, and because it is practically immaterial to the living whether the past, unchangeable to all eternity, is represented in one way or another.

If information about final causes were as interesting to man as that about immediate ones, theology would long ago have vanished like the natural history of Pliny, the biology of Aristotle, and the cosmology of Ptolemæus. If information about the past were as important to him as information about the future, they would long ago have seen that history has nothing more reliable to tell about the one than astrology or cheiromancy about the other, and that the historian who described himself as a backward-looking prophet [1] correctly estimated his own credibility as about equal to that of the soothsayer who pretends to reveal the future.

Human curiosity demands an explanation of the past, and written history pretends to be able to give it. Mankind is satisfied with the connected narrative it presents, because they have no reason for questioning its truth. It pleases them first because it satisfies a want, then because it is uncommonly entertaining and exciting. The love of stories is inborn in man. He delights to hear of a picturesque and melodramatic past, of extraordinary events to which common experience affords no parallel, and the deeds and destiny of unusual men. Historical narrative is full of tragedies, dramas, comedies of char-

[1] The phrase was coined by Sainte-Beuve, who applied it to Bossuet.

acter and intrigue, novels of adventure. But the excitement that it arouses is purely æsthetic, and not essentially different from that with which one hears or reads the "Thousand and one Nights." It only differs from admitted fairy-tales by its piquant attempt to prove that everything did actually happen as it is set down.

Curiosity, developing into the desire for information and knowledge, is, as I have said, one origin of the writing of history; the other is self-love. Everyone thinks his doings important, and his experiences worthy of being preserved. Homer's Nestor, chanting the praises of the matchless men and deeds of his youth, with which the young generation has nothing to compare, is an eternal human type, civilized and uncivilized, primitive or modern. Man loves to imagine himself performing prodigies of strength and courage: he would fain be represented permanently in the rôle of conquering hero. This attitude flatters his self-esteem. Moreover, since a warlike exterior has always enriched its possessor with distinctions and privileges, it has a practical utility as well.

The savage notches or smears upon his arms the number of enemies he has slain. The Indian paints the combat in which he has been victorious on the outside of his wigwam, and carries the scalps of the vanquished at his belt, while the custom of the tribe provides strictly that the number of eagle-feathers he wears when in battle array is no more than that of the warriors he has slain. These notches, smears, eagle-feathers, scalps and paintings are the earliest historical records, useless, indeed, for the community, but full of flattering meaning for him whose deeds they testify and keep alive in the

memories of contemporaries and those who come after, and of value, as a rule, for his family and posterity. Fame is a means to power in the hands of lordlings and tribal chieftains. They maintain their authority more easily, and without the necessity of resorting to compulsion, when their dependents and those whom they have subdued regard them with admiration and fear. Hence the bards retained to glorify their deeds by the Greeks of the mythical, heroic age, by the German and Scandinavian warrior kings and the Norman conquerors. Official history—history written with a purpose—is legitimately descended from the songs invented by the hired poets, the bards and skalds, for the glorification of the heroic deeds of their master and his forefathers; while the free-and-easy school of historical literature, that does not trouble about tendencies, and is sufficient to itself, in so far as it exists at all, derives from Herodotus and the pleasant writers of his school, who simply recorded remarkable and unusual events.

The march of intellectual development deepens our curiosity into the desire to know and transforms instinctive self-love into a conscious idea of the underlying unity of all individual interests, and an organized attempt to maintain and uphold them against other conflicting interests. In the simple, primitive conditions of savage or half-savage tribes, it was enough for the warrior to revel in the recollection of his exploits; he would create a flattering impression by recounting them to his comrades, and then assist their memories by mnemonic images, pictures, and signs, and the more effective medium of rhythmic verse. With the development of the horde or tribe into a people politically or-

ganized under a leader or clan, claiming and ruthlessly exercising prerogatives, tradition acquires the greatest practical importance for those in possession. In so far as their exceptional position at the head of the community is the result of some exceptional deed, it is a matter of life and death to them to foster remembrance of this deed, and use it to rouse in the imagination of the people fear, admiration, superstitious reverence—every sentiment, in a word, that can assist to maintain and, where possible, to increase their power. The earliest historical records are inscriptions and carvings on the temples, palaces, fortresses or tombs set up by kings to celebrate their victorious wars and the battles they have won, the towns they have taken, the enemies they have captured or slaughtered, the people subjugated to their sway, the riches and possessions of every kind they have amassed. The historical Egyptian and Assyrian inscriptions we possess contain little else. Who had a natural interest in preserving from oblivion the facts which they commemorate? Only the kings whose deeds they glorify and the descendants who inherited their power. It was matter of indifference, even of advantage, to everyone else that any recollection of them should fade into the obscurity of the past.

Conquerors, warriors, founders of dynasties, and the inheritors of their power, are impelled to transmit a knowledge of their exploits to those who come after by means of every kind of self-glorification in the shape of pictures, inscriptions, signs, etc., from the same motive which induces the possessor of any kind of privilege, great or small, to preserve every justification of it—preserve or, where necessary, create. It may be asserted

that down to quite recent times there has been practically no instance where a record has been authenticated or set up from the disinterested desire for knowledge of important events, but that in almost every case the creation and establishment of the record was due the furtherance of some private interest. Cloisters and bishoprics had their cartularies, in which many false entries are found mixed up with genuine ones; noble families had their archives; towns, guilds, and corporations their charters and constitutions; and the object of all these parchments and papers was to guard the privileges of individuals and groups, not to provide material for scientific knowledge.

Every institution arises in response to some requirement. Even conquest, organized plunder, the murderous rule of a King of Dahomey, are means to the satisfaction of a powerful personality which revels in unlimited dominion and destruction. The creators of institutions need no support from history. Their establishment depends on their own organic necessities, and their title on their will and power to act in accordance with these necessities. But the necessities change and alter; the institutions due to their impetus remain. The moment comes when they have not the strength to maintain themselves, and no rational arguments are forthcoming for their defence. Then those to whom their continued existence is profitable call upon history to undertake the task of frightening off criticism and discouraging attacks, by throwing a rampart of pompous and dignified formulæ round the structure that is collapsing from internal weakness.

Goethe has summed up the course of all institutions

in one immortal line, "Reason turns to nonsense, and benefit to nuisance"; and Chateaubriand expresses the same idea when he says, "Every institution goes through three stages—utility, privilege, abuse." When the day of utility is over the uses and abuses remain, and, if inconveniently called to account by the present, point back to the past with a wealth of mysterious sacerdotalism. Examples are hardly necessary; one may suffice. The nobility was originally—about the ninth century—a class of strong, warlike men, who maintained order within their district, and defended the life and property of the people resident there against murder and robbery, demanding in return unconditional suzerainty over their subjects, and such share of their property as they chose to appropriate.[1] Later, a single sovereign, the king, undertook the maintenance of peace at home, and a standing army, police, and a stable constitutional and legal system fulfilled all the tasks once belonging to the nobility. Though thus relieved of all their duties, they nevertheless gave up none of the privileges that had been won by their ancestors as recompense for the toils and dangers of perpetual conflict. They had no reply when, on the eve of the great Revolution, Beaumarchais, in the "Marriage of Figaro," spat in their faces the words, "Ye took the trouble to be born"; they could only

[1] H. Taine, "Origines de la France Contemporaine: L'Ancien Régime," Paris, 1887, p. 10: "In any case the noble of that epoch is the brave, the strong man, expert in the use of arms, who bares his breast at the head of a company instead of fleeing and paying ransom . . . holds his ground, and protects a piece of land with his sword. For this work he needs no ancestors; he only needs courage; he is an ancestor himself; men are too grateful for the benefits he confers to grumble over his title."

point to old parchments and splendid seals for their title to fatten on the life-blood of the people. When the French peasantry after the Revolution stormed the castles, and first of all plundered the archives and burned the records, they were unconsciously executing a symbolic act. They recognized thereby that these discoloured witnesses of a dead past were the still living roots that nourished the feudal tree, and must be exterminated before it could be destroyed.

The historical sense is natural in all those who profit by respect for tradition; in others it is the artificial product of education and culture. There is good reason why the ruler exercising an authority created by the force of a strong ancestor, a nobility possessing riches, position, and power, originating in a more or less remote past, or the representatives of the numerous and varied interests that gather round a court and ruling class, should foster and glorify the recollection of their origin, and devote an honorable branch of every institution to the study of the past. It is to their advantage to do so, and they have the means to impress their point of view upon the multitude, for whom tradition represents nothing but repression, humiliation, and injury. The ruling classes lay down the course of instruction to be followed in schools, the conditions of examinations, and the official position of different branches of study; chairs are founded by them, the position and dignity of academies and learned societies depend on them; salaries are disbursed by them; the encouragement and endowment of research comes from them, and its results are rewarded by them with official positions, orders and decorations; and they have it thus entirely in their

power to raise the knowledge of history to the most important place in general culture, and to give to the writing of it a specially high rank among intellectual and scientific activities. Moreover, the general estimation of the worth and importance of any branch of knowledge depends primarily, not upon its value as knowledge or its utility to the individual, but upon the repute in which it is held in the State and society—that is to say, among those who have the power and the deciding voice.

Various intellectual elements compose this artificially fostered feeling for history. First there is the effect of the patronage of the ruling class. It is thought to be well-bred to imitate their views. Then there is the weakness of judgment which makes people incapable of independent or rational criticism, and the intellectual laziness which finds comfort in the generally accepted view. It follows from these characteristics of human thought that, although the majority may obtain no advantage from an institution—may even suffer from it —they will feel a respect for its antiquity, and look upon its remote origin as sufficient justification for its continued existence. Moreover, the rebellious spirits of the present day, who have everything to gain by having things as they are, reality, weighed in the balance, compared and estimated: and everything to lose by the preference for, and exclusive consideration of, what is over and done with, what never really has been, what has been created by recollection—these men are actually proud of their historical sense, of caring more for what has been than for what is, more for the dead than the living, and would be ashamed of any deficiency in it.

It is natural, since this point of view is of extraordinary utility to all those who have inherited privileges, that they should devote every effort to maintain the possession of historical knowledge to be an advantage and a point of breeding, and declare that anyone who is without it must be incomplete, debased, possibly weak in intellect, and certainly a vulgarian.

This is the practical significance of the preoccupation with the past, and the disproportionate value attached thereto. It would be one-sided, however, to refuse to recognize the strong attraction possessed by historical narrative from an æsthetic and general psychological point of view. Its stories are exciting and amusing. The imagination is charmed and the slumbering mysticism inherent in the human mind agreeably stirred by a glimpse into the misty regions of the distant past. We long to draw aside the veil from what is partly hidden, to build up the ruins, to call up the spirits that are buried, and solve the riddles that clamour for solution. Poetic dreams are wakened in us by the mysterious faces that swim before us out of the dimness of the past.

Finally, historic narrative has the charm of offering us the logical satisfaction of a clear and consistent explanation of many institutions, customs, and records that are incomprehensible in their existing form. Much that outrages the intelligence to-day, by its absurd and contemptible injustice, is convincingly explained by the discovery of its origin and the fact that it then was rational, well founded, and, if not abstractedly just, at least suited to the conditions of the time. Written history is a zealous and eloquent counsel for the existing order, and secures acquittal or a judgment of extenuating

circumstances for many a client that deserves condemnation. The advocate does not even imperil his success by the admission that his defence rests on the dangerous ground of incomplete information as to fact, arbitrary inventions, and uncritical inferences of his own. All these causes explain the sedulous attention which all civilized peoples devote to historical research and writing, in spite of the utter worthlessness of history as a guide to life, and the extremely small and uncertain information it can afford of the near, far less of the remote, past.

I will now summarize the conclusions I hope to have established.

History is not identical with written history, and is only to a very small extent included within it. The claim of written history to be a science is unfounded. It is not a descriptive science, since it is not certain of the facts which it claims to collect and establish,[1] nor a pure science, since it knows nothing of the laws that govern the causal relations of the events of human life.[2] It provides us with no knowledge. It does not assist the adaptation of the species to the conditions of life given by nature. It affords it no help in the struggle for existence. Moreover, it corresponds to no natural requirement of the human mind, except, perhaps, the

[1] It does, of course, partly know the cruder, external facts: that battles were fought at Marathon, on the Catalonian plains, at Lutzen, and at Sadowa; that Cæsar, Charlemagne, and Napoleon have lived, etc.; but (P. Lacombe, *op. cit.*, p. x) "what is the use of mere knowledge of bare facts? What use is it to us to know that . . . a Macedonian called Alexander . . . defeated the Persians at such and such a place . . . without deducing some truth or some feeling?"

[2] Georg Simmel (*op. cit.*, p. 43) maintains that history delineates "scientifically" what has actually happened (it cannot do so, as

highly general desire for an illumination of the surrounding darkness. This it can only satisfy formally, for the pictures that it throws upon the black background of the past are not aspects of reality, but projections of subjective ideas. The greatest events, even, are only for three generations a part of the living consciousness of posterity and those most intimately concerned in them. After that remembrance is only preserved in books, which are a dead-letter to the great majority; or, in the case of less civilized peoples, as the kernel of fantastic sagas, which are preserved by the tribe, not for their truth, but for their charm as fairy-tales. Nowadays remembrance is probably not even preserved in this form. The impulse to the creation of folk-lore dies away as intellectual development progresses, and memory is less relied upon when the habit of trusting to the written word grows up. The high favour, nevertheless, still enjoyed by written history rests on the love of story-telling innate in mankind and the intense æsthetic delight felt in stories of human life, adventure tales, and anecdotes, whether true or invented. The historical sense is an artificial product of the ruling classes, who use it as a means for investing the existing order, which is advantageous to themselves alone, with a mystic and poetic

I have shown), but does not need "to be carried to the point of establishing the laws governing historical events"; but some pages farther on (p. 53) he contradicts himself by correctly stating, "There would be no history did we not see a meaning behind the external event, an intention behind the external deed, and a sensation behind the external definition; interpretation alone gives it meaning." But the interpretation is arbitrary and purely subjective, the opposite of scientific; thus that which, even according to Simmel, gives rise to history (more correctly to written history) removes its claim to be a science.

charm, for beautifying abuses by the glorification of their origin, and for casting a glamour of half-tender, half-reverential awe over institutions that have long lost any reasonable justification and become useless and meaningless. Its practical purpose, in a word, is to oppress and deceive the present with the assistance of the past.

CHAPTER II

THE CUSTOMARY PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY

It is only at a very early stage of human development that the desire for knowledge, so far as it exists at all, is confined to what previously existed; it is soon extended to the why and the how. Men are no longer satisfied with facts, more or less hidden, more or less credible; they demand to understand their causal connection. They fight against the conception of chance as the motive force in the universe, and strive to discover some determining law of which it is the visible expression. Those who related the story of the past were conscious of this desire, and strove to satisfy it by passing from a naïve chronicle of events to a pragmatic historical method, in which they developed one event from another, explained one by another, and described one as conditioned by another. From the examples already given in the preceding section, whose number could easily be increased, it can be seen how arbitrary this connection and interpretation, as a matter of fact, was in almost every case, and to what extent it was dominated by the subjective feelings and opinions of the narrator. Human longing for knowledge was not arrested by the pragmatic method of historical description. It pretended to offer an explanation of isolated phenomena while neglecting altogether the notion of a universal story, of which the narration of the historian represents only a part. Long

before the conception became definite it was dimly realized by men that all human existence is a unified process, in which the concrete events that are the subject of written history are but incidental features. They felt a keen desire to advance from arithmetic to algebra, from the action of one individual or group of individuals to a universal formula that should include the regular course of human action as a whole. Thus the transition was made from historical writing proper, the narration of events with a definite space and time, to the philosophy of history.

We need not dig very deep to find the source of the philosophy of history. "Singly or collectively," as Lacombe[1] correctly observed, "it displeases us to be the sport of chance." In other words, we think causally, and our intellect cannot rest until it has assigned to every phenomenon that it perceives such a cause as seems adequate at the stage of knowledge which has been reached, and can without glaring contradiction be fitted into the current system of ideas and judgments. It is frequently maintained, and repeated without examination, that the philosophy of history, both the word and the thing, originated with Voltaire.[2] Baudrillart proved this to be an error.[3] He proved that, two centuries before Voltaire, Jean Bodin consciously developed a philosophy of history. But he failed to notice, or at least to mention, that the "philosophy of history" was

[1] P. Lacombe, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

[2] R. Rocholl, "The Philosophy of History: a critical account of the attempts to create it," Göttingen, 1878, p. 66. Rocholl gives Bagehot as his authority for "the appearance of the term in Voltaire (Paris edition of 1822)."

[3] Baudrillart, "Jean Bodin et Son Temps," Paris, 1853.

also first used by Bodin. He casually remarks that "Philo the Jew might be called a philosophic historian." [1]

The philosophy of history is an attempt to give a rational explanation of historical events. It endeavours to discover the law that regulates them, and to trace a meaning in its operation that introduces logical order into the events of the past, illuminates the present, and casts some light upon the future. There can be no worthier task for the human mind. But it has hitherto been attempted with most inadequate means and by most faulty methods.

The philosophy of history must proceed from the assumption that history is governed by some law. Even chance would be such a law; but if chance had to be regarded as the law of history, its philosophy would end where it began. It could have nothing more to say were it once established that human affairs were governed by blind unregulated accident. A round nought at the bottom would be all that could be made of such a sum. This is a conclusion which has not, so far, been reached by a philosopher of any standing. Every one has proceeded on the assumption that there must be some rational meaning in the life of man as displayed in his history, and devoted himself simply to discovering and expressing what that meaning is. Hardly one has thought it necessary to investigate the theoretical basis and justification of the assumption.

[1] I. Bodini, "Methodus ad facilem historiarum cognitionem," Amsteeaedami, Sumptibus Joannis Ravesteiny, 1650, caput x.: "De historicorum ordine et collectione." P. 398: ". . . Philonis Judæi qui Philosophistoricus appellari potest. . . ."

Nevertheless, the demand that history—that is to say, that human life—must possess a meaning intelligible to man is nothing more nor less than anthropomorphism. Self-observation teaches man that every conscious act of will is preceded by some thought and directed to some purpose. He cannot imagine a man's acting without this conscious exercise of will and purpose, unless he be drunk, sleep-walking, or mad. Generalizing, then, from his own subjective experience, he applies it to the realm of phenomena, from which it was not deduced, and to which it does not apply. Human life, looked at as a whole, seems to him to be continuous activity, and he seeks for its meaning as though it were, like an afternoon call or an Easter holiday, the outcome of human reflection and human will, and not the outcome of a combination of forces operating outside the sphere of human will and consciousness. He goes on in the same way to assimilate humanity to the individual, and to identify its becoming, being, and doing with that of the individual; and thinks that, just as he can say in the case of the action of a man, "What does he mean by it?" he can say to the course of history as a whole, "What does humanity mean by it?"

He does not notice what arbitrary and unproved assumptions are contained in this question. It premises that the events composing the fabric of history are fulfilled in accordance with a predetermined purpose. But purposive action is only conceivable as guided by an idea and a will conscious of that purpose and of reasons for pursuing it. In what consciousness is there developed the idea of a purpose governing the historical action of mankind and a will directing it to this purpose?

Not in the consciousness of a man, for no man acts from any conscious purpose save the fulfillment of some immediate need, whether he be the greatest or the meanest: the conqueror who lays the world in ruins at his feet and builds it up anew, who leads his armies across three continents, murdering, harrying, and laying waste by fire and sword; the discoverer, who binds a new force of nature to the service of mankind, and carries civilization a step further on its way; or the day labourer, whose activity provides for the satisfaction of his own wants and creates the material for his own support and that of the community as a whole. The connection between his action and the course of the total life of man, of which he is not conscious, determines it as little as do the distant consequences and remote effects of which he has no suspicion. Moreover, only a small portion of mankind were affected by the greatest deeds, whether of individual personalities or of nations, which history records, such as the destruction of the Persian Empire by Alexander the Great, the conquest of Gaul by Cæsar, the establishment of Christianity among the Gentiles by the Apostle Paul, and the discovery of America by Columbus; the great majority have been entirely unaware of them at the time. If they have exercised any influence upon their destiny, it has been remote and secondary, and it is only by doing violence by facts that a meaning can be sought or found in them relative to the course of human history as a whole.

A developed idea of a rational purpose governing human affairs and a will directed to its fulfilment is not to be found in the consciousness of any actor. There

are historical personages who were in their time famed for their foresight, and who are known as the authors of far-reaching and comprehensive schemes and of political testaments. Henry IV. of France dreamed of a federated Europe, Richelieu made the fighting and weakening of the Hapsburgs the one object of French policy for a century and a half, and Frederick the Great left a wide range of advice to his successor. Had the idea of any object of political activity other than the direct advantage of their own country or dynasty entered the minds of these or any other men, they would have expressed it as they did their ideas of the line of policy to be pursued for the profit and aggrandizement of their realm. Had they done so, we should possess reliable information as to the lines and aims of human development, instead of being dependent on the ingenious suppositions and impudent assertions of philosophic historians, who, without any practical experience of action, are always able to give us precise information as to the motives which were unknown to the actors themselves.

I think I have proved that the conception of a purpose governing the historical action of mankind is not present in the consciousness of the actors, nor the outcome of their will. To establish the existence in that action of a rational meaning and an aim, another consciousness must be postulated which knows the aim, conceives the purpose, and excites its will for its realization. Such a consciousness can only exist outside of humanity. It must be situated in a Mind that thinks, develops ideas, can exercise will, and uses men as the ploughman uses the oxen that draw his plough, without

knowing why or to what end. But such a thinking and willing Mind above and beyond humanity would be God. Now, the philosophy of history could only rest upon a scientific basis had the course of history itself displayed such a conception of purpose at work as finds no place in the consciousness of man, and involves the assumption of God as consciously directing the unconscious action of mankind. But its actual procedure has been the exact opposite of this. The existence of God was from the beginning taken as proved, and as postulating the conception of a purpose in history; after this artifice the reality of the conception no longer requires to be proved by historical facts, since it can be referred back to God, whose existence has already been assumed.

The problem involved in the question as to the meaning of human action was not at first apparent to the philosophic historian. It is like the flask that Loki cunningly set before Thor, and which he in vain tried to empty. He did not see that it was the ocean that he was trying to drain. Humanity is a portion of the universe. Its destiny is bound up with, and dependent on, the universal. There was a world before man; there will be a world after him. If human existence has a meaning, the existence of the universe must have a meaning too. The appearance and future disappearance of humanity is a trivial episode in the eternal origination and disappearance of the solar system and life-bearing planets. One episode in a process cannot have a meaning if the process itself has none. If the warp and woof of the universe is a chaos of eternal forces, contending without aim or purpose visible to human reason, it is obviously vain to look for any rational aim or purpose in human

existence, or in any life that comes into being for a moment when matter in the form of primary vapour thickens to form a heavenly body, lasts for a while, and is doomed to dissolution when matter passes from the heavenly body back to the condition of primary vapour. As a matter of fact, the philosophy of history undertakes to lift the veil that shrouds the great secret of the universe, and tries to catch hold of it by the nearest corner —the one which covers the history of human life. Could it but succeed in demonstrating that the development of mankind upon the earth is directed towards a rational purpose, and prove the attainment of this purpose to lie along the line of the actual movements of mankind in the course of their history, it would thereby have reached a point from which a far further view of eternity could be gained. We could then proceed logically from the rational aim of human development to a rational purpose in the universe as a whole, and find a satisfactory answer to the question why energy is perpetually flashing across the universe? why the heavenly bodies pursue an endless round of rising and setting? why life and consciousness arose in the cosmos? what is the meaning of the world? However the philosophy of history may appear to deduce the conception of purpose solely from the actions of man, it really undertakes the solution of the riddle of the universe, and its solution is the same as that with which mankind originally tried to satisfy their desire to know. Humanity silenced the earliest demands of its reason to comprehend natural phenomena by pleasing inventions, arrived at by means of the method of analogy. The world must be the work of an inconceivably clever and powerful artist, as implements of

stone, weapons, clothes, and huts were the handiwork of clever men. Thunder and lightning, the roar of the winter storm, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, represented the anger of some tremendous warrior, who threatened men with death and destruction, after the fashion of the enemies, animal and human, to whom they were accustomed. All primitive religion is to some extent the outcome of the need for assigning a rational meaning and comprehensive cause to the phenomena of the external world. Imagination steps in where certain information falls short. Until the human mind has learned to observe facts patiently, with an attention sternly disciplined, it will accept any convenient notion that happens to be presented to it.

Before it arrives at testing its hypotheses by continual comparison with reality, experiences are arbitrarily combined and uncritically generalized into stories. Any correction of these stories is resisted as an inconvenient disturbance of a comfortable habit of thought. The mythology which invents gods in the likeness of men, in order to explain the world, introduces the conception of a rational purpose into history in order to shield mankind from the horror of its incomprehensibility. A philosophy of history which tries to interpret history by means of preconceived opinions is not a gamble, as Simmel[1] calls "metaphysical speculations about history," but theology, as Trezza correctly observes.[2] The

[1] Georg Simmel, "Problems of the Philosophy of History," Leipzig, 1892, p. 105.

[2] Trezza, quoted by R. Rocholl (*op. cit.*, p. 229): "There has hitherto been no philosophy of history, for the theological method introducing a divine providence or a rule of law that is entirely foreign has no claim to be such."

assumption of Gods, or of a God, released men from that time forward from the necessity of searching further explanation. God is an answer to everything, a way out of every difficulty. The beginning of all things? God! The purpose of all existence? The knowledge and worship of God. The meaning of human life? A preparation for the eternal service of God. The philosophy of history merely waves the torch of religion across the darkness that it pretends to light up. It decrees that the progress of history is directed by God. Human action has a purpose laid down by God. This purpose is the attainment of goodness, virtue, justice, and wisdom by means of the subjugation of evil. Nationalities are forms through which humanity must pass in a perpetually ascending scale of freedom and morality. This unctuous doctrine has been put forward in almost every philosophy of history up to the present day, in complete disregard of the innumerable facts that prove such dogmatism to be the most senseless twaddle. For one Lingard, who candidly admits that History represents the sorrows heaped upon all men by "the passions of the few," there are ten Bancrofts crying with uplifted eyes that "History is a divine power that cannot be falsified by human interpolations." William von Humboldt declares: "The historian must believe in the governance of the universe." Schelling sees in history as a whole "a continuous revelation of the Absolute gradually accomplishing itself." Krause confidently preaches that "History describes the temporal revelation of God," and the dominant idea of Bunsen's philosophy of history is sufficiently expressed in its title, "God in History."

"Much the same way the preacher spoke,
Only with slightly different phrases."—(FAUST.)

But the preacher assigns his wisdom to divine revelation, while the historians maintain that their view is drawn from the facts of history. But their attitude to these facts, one and all of them! They treat them as the gardener of a French park treats his box-hedges. They clip them, improve them, and alter them, until they assume the shape that they have determined upon from the beginning. They approach history with the preconceived notion that it declares the purposeful ruling of God, and overlooking or omitting whatever does not harmonize with, or absolutely contradicts, this view, they arbitrarily and forcibly twist the rest into the shape they want.

The theologians are really the most honest in their procedure. They resort to faith without any beating about the bush, and so avoid the necessity of convincing the critical understanding. They set up their assertions, and triumphantly cast a verse from the Bible in the teeth of any heretic who ventures to dispute them. Anyone godless enough to question the authority of the Bible is damned, and the most they can do is to pray for the salvation of his soul. The first and most distinguished of this class of philosophic historians is St. Augustine, who, in his principal work, "De Civitate Dei," undertook to discover and relate the meaning of all human history. There are two kingdoms, the divine and the earthly. "The kingdom of God is that whose citizens we long to be, with the love inspired in us by its founder. The citizens of the earthly kingdom prefer their idols to

the founder of the heavenly kingdom." [1] The kingdom of God is that of the pious and true believers, the earthly kingdom that of heathens and heretics. "Thus the two different kingdoms have been created by two different kinds of love: the earthly by the love of self rising to a contempt of God, the heavenly by a love of God rising to contempt of self." [2] "We have no assurance that mankind was at the time of Arphaxates removed from the worship of the true God, but the kingdom or society of the impious may be dated from the impiously arrogant attempt to build a tower reaching to Heaven." [3] "A premonition of the kingdom of God may be noted . . . at the time of the patriarch Abraham, after which it becomes more pronounced." [4] The kingdom of God was fully revealed to man at the coming of Jesus Christ. Since His mortal pilgrimage, the earthly kingdom, which serves Satan, the fallen angel who rose in rebellion against God, has fought obstinately, but with ever-weakening strength, against the kingdom of God, which will at the end of time finally conquer the earthly kingdom; the number of the saints determined by God will be fulfilled, and after the elimination of evil from the earth, mankind will be admitted to full communion with God. The life of humanity upon earth lasts seven of God's days of a thousand years each. The first day lasts from the creation of Adam to the Flood, the second from the Flood to Abraham, the third from Abraham to David, the fourth from David to the Babylonian captivity of the Jews, the fifth from the Babylonian captivity to the Advent of Christ. Since Christ mankind has been

[1] "De Civitate Dei," xi. 1.
[2] *Ibid.*, xiv. 28.
[3] *Ibid.*, xvi. 10.
[4] *Ibid.*, xvi. 12.

living in the sixth day. At the close of the sixth day the Last Judgment and the Resurrection will take place, and the seventh day will begin God's day of rest—the Sabbath that has no end.[1] St. Augustine's chronology is not perfectly exact. The third day does not include a full thousand years, but only fourteen generations, which became much shorter after the time of the patriarchs than they were from Adam down to the Flood, and in the time of Abraham. St. Augustine is also careful to remark that he cannot answer for the duration of the sixth day. He wished to avoid the possibility that six hundred years hence—he wrote his book on the Kingdom of God in A.D. 400—his calculations might be falsified by the non-arrival of the Last Judgment. The sixth day is "nullo generationum numero metienda"—not measurable by any number of generations—because it stands in Holy Writ; "non est vestrum scire tempora quæ pater posuit in sua potestate"—"it is not yours to know the things which are in the hand of the Father." This did not prevent Christianity in A.D. 1000 from expecting the end of the world, the termination of the sixth day, and beginning of the Sabbath according to St. Augustine. But when the awful day, expected with mortal fears, passed by without anything remarkable happening, the reputation of the prophets who had followed Augustine in dating the Sabbath for the year 1000 did not suffer at all. Real faith is not perturbed by facts that prove to be ridiculous—it passes them by or interprets them in some other way.

The plan of the philosophy of history of the Bishop of Hippo places it outside the reach of rational criticism.

[1] "De Civitate Dei," xxii. 30.

One can hardly investigate seriously such dogmatic assertions as those concerning the revolt of Satan against God, the seven days of the world, and the Resurrection and Last Judgment on the eve of the seventh day. St. Augustine records the pious fairy-tale of his own invention with fervour, and does not trouble at all about its truth. His sole source is the Bible. He accepts every word literally. He regards Adam, his sons and descendants, Noah and Abraham, as historical personages. He believes in Methusaleh's 969 years. His mode of thought and his logic may be estimated from passages like the following: "Of all visible things, the greatest is the world: of invisible, the greatest is God. That the world is, we see; that God is, we believe. Our belief that God made the world rests on the testimony of no less a witness than God Himself. Where have we heard Him? In no less place than Holy Writ, where His prophet has said, 'In the beginning God made the Heaven and the Earth.'" [1]

For him a verse in the Bible is proof of the existence of God, and a sufficient explanation of the origin of the universe. The only ancient history that has any value or existence for him is the history of the Jewish people. He turns away from the past of all the rest of mankind with perfect indifference. The account of Christ in the Gospels is for him strict historical truth. The coming of Christ, of which the greatest peoples of the earth knew nothing, and which seemed to the majority of his own contemporaries, living in the scene of His activity, an event so unimportant that it is not recorded by one impartial contemporary witness—this is to him

[1] "De Civitate Dei," xi. 4.

the greatest event in history, and its sole essential content. The growth and decay of nations, the rise and fall of kingdoms, the struggle in the community for power and dominion, the rise and modifications of public institutions, are to him matters of complete indifference, except in so far as they can be connected with the ostensible preparations for, and spread of, Christianity, its battles and its victories. What are race-migrations, wars, or revolutions? Why linger over them? why inquire as to their origin and development? why seek for a law governing their progress? All that has no significance. On the one side are the faithful who believe in Jesus, on the other the servants of the devil, who will know naught of Him. Between the two camps there is irreconcilable enmity, until in the fulness of time there comes the Last Judgment, and all history is brought to its sacred conclusion with the triumph of the kingdom of God over Satan and his crew.

Such is the philosophy of history as expounded by St. Augustine. It is a supplement to the Bible and the Catechism. It is based upon revelation, and scorns earthly proofs. It has nothing to do with reason. Anyone who doubts or denies is a heretic, deserves only the treatment the Church reserves for such. It is understandable that the Middle Ages should have reverently followed in the steps of the Bishop of Hippo, and built up their history upon his interpretation. It is less comprehensible that he should have pointed out the way which the philosophy of history has followed down to recent times. Bossuet was a Bishop of the Roman Church, so it need excite no surprise to find him occupying quite the same point of view as his African brother.

He, too, divides history into seven epochs, though he assigns their limits somewhat differently. With the Bishop of Meaux, the third period extends down to Moses, the fourth to Solomon and the building of the first temple, the fifth to the return of the Jews from Babylon, the sixth to the birth of Jesus, and the seventh down to the last day. The two first parts of his "Discours sur l'Histoire Universelle" are devoted to the people of Israel, with a few casual remarks on the peoples with whom they came in contact, and by whom their destinies were influenced. We have to wait for the third and shortest section for any fuller treatment of the Asiatic world powers, of the classical nations, and of Western Europe generally, down to the time of Charlemagne; but Bossuet justifies this to his own satisfaction by saying: "These kingdoms have for the most part a necessary connection with God's chosen people. God made use of the Assyrians and Babylonians to chastise His people, of the Persians to restore it, of Alexander and his immediate successors to protect it, of Antiochus Epiphanes and his successors to test it, of the Romans to maintain it in freedom against the Syrian kings, bent only on its destruction. The Jews remained under the power of these same Romans down to the time of Jesus Christ. When they denied and crucified Him, divine vengeance used the unconscious Romans as the instrument for the extermination of the thankless race. Having resolved at a certain time to gather all peoples together into a new community, God joined land and sea under the sway of this empire. One of the most powerful instruments of Providence for the free spread of the Gospel was the intercourse thus afforded between the

many different peoples, who ceased to be strangers to one another when they were brought together under the dominion of Rome." [1]

The blind faith of the Middle Ages makes it little astonishing that the medieval historians—Ekkehard, Bede, Isidor of Seville—accepted, as did Bossuet, the seven epochs of St. Augustine, and the four world powers of the prophet Daniel. It is, however, amazing to find Bossuet's views expounded with solemn earnestness down to recent times. Johannes von Müller declares with an assurance that admits of no doubts, "Jesus Christ is the key to the history of the universe." Schelling says almost in the same words: "Christianity is the centre and key of all history." Fichte is, as usual, rather nebulous and mystical, but if his pronouncement at the close of his "Characteristics of the Present Age" be correctly interpreted, he anticipates as the end of history the realization of the Christianity of the Gospel according to St. John, the kingdom of heaven upon earth, a spiritual kingdom of love. Unlike the clerical historians, he never cites the Bible; his knowledge is wholly drawn from the depths of his own inner consciousness. "The philosopher who concerns himself, as a philosopher, with history follows up the *à priori* clue to the cause of the world, which is clear to him apart from history. His conclusions are already established prior to and independent of history, which is to him useless as a method of proof." [2] A philosophy of history

[1] Bossuet, "Discours sur l'Histoire Universelle à Monseigneur le Dauphin," part iii., chap. i.

[2] J. S. Fichte, "The Characteristics of the Present Age," collected works, edited by J. H. Fichte, Berlin, 1846, vol. vii., p. 139.

which can unerringly establish the object and meaning of history without studying it is indeed the *chef d'œuvre* of intellectual gymnastics.

Of course, a juggler who is clever in the use of dialectic, and unscrupulous enough to combine, without criticism, events that are glaringly discrepant, can readily draw a historical picture in which every event refers back to Jesus and depends upon Christianity. But by the same inventive sophistry it could be proved that the course of universal history up to 1492 was only a preparation for the discovery of America, which has determined its course ever since; or, to push the joke a little further, to find the meaning of history and its obvious aim in the invention of the game of Skat, with the Persian War, the destruction of the Roman Empire, the dissolution of the Spanish world-monarchy, the Thirty Years' War, the French Revolution, and the campaign of 1870 as its preliminary stages. The whole course of history can in this fashion be referred to any event whatsoever, only provided that events are arranged and selected accordingly, some being omitted and an unreal importance assigned to others.

Voltaire [1] ridicules Bossuet's conception of history, yet his " Discours sur l'Histoire Universelle " is used to this day as a textbook in higher-grade schools in France. Robert Flint, author of the best general account of the literature on the philosophy of history of the principal European nations, enters a wise caution against the views of St. Augustine, Orosius, Bossuet, and their disciples, whose " assertion of the existence, power, and

[1] Voltaire, " Essai sur les Mœurs et l'Esprit des Nations, Œuvres Complètes," Paris, 1853, chap. iii., p. 73, § 1.

wisdom of the First Providential Cause . . . is not supported by adequate proof." But a few lines further on he is guilty of the same dogmatism himself: "The ultimate and greatest triumph of historical philosophy will really be neither more nor less than the full proof of Providence, the discovery by the processes of scientific method of a divine plan which unifies and harmonizes the apparent chaos of human actions contained in history in a cosmos." [1] There could be no more ingenuous confession of the old deductive, aphoristic mode of thought. The genuine seeker after truth and knowledge must approach facts without preconceived opinions about them. If human destiny seems chaotic, he must sadly admit that he sees it as chaos, and can discover in it neither order nor meaning. Flint does not do so. He starts with the conviction that history must evidence a Providence and divine plan. Whence does he obtain this conviction? Not from history—history appears to him a chaos—but from the arbitrary invention of his own fancy, from his own wishes and desires. He approaches history with a subjective conviction already formed. What he sees directly contradicts his conviction. He sees no plan, no Providence; only a chaos. Far from bowing before the truth and abandoning the conviction that is falsified by the testimony of his eyes, he clings to it, and confidently expects that facts will accommodate themselves to it! All honour, then, to the courageous consistency of a Fichte who proudly declares that his opinion of history was formed without so much as a glance at it, and that the cursed

[1] Robert Flint, "The Philosophy of History in France and Germany," Edinburgh and London, 1874, p. 22.

facts have got to conform to his opinion as best they may!

There is one most serious difficulty in the way of those who wish to see history directed by a divine plan throughout, and echoing the praises of the all-wisdom and goodness of God: or to regard it, with Schelling,[1] as a "revelation of God," or "an epic composed in the mind of God": a difficulty that has involved many of them in most fearful confusion—namely, the presence of evil in the world. There is no denying it. It is far too glaring for that. History displays an unbroken succession of wars and conquests, tyranny and risings against it, deceit and treachery crowned by success and triumphant over persecuted virtue, and might victorious over right. Is all this to be regarded as the direct will of a moral order governing the world? Can it be the hand of a loving God that purposely heaps these horrors upon man? To explain suffering as, on the one hand, a punishment for the sins of men, and, on the other, as a salutary discipline ordained by Providence to test and purge them, so that they may be worthy of the eternal grace of God, may satisfy a superficial philosopher. More profound thinkers cannot dismiss the question so easily. Leibnitz required the many volumes of his "Theodicy" to prove that all is arranged for the best in this best of all possible worlds, and that all the phe-

[1] Fr. W. J. v. Schelling, "Collected Works," Stuttgart and Augsburg, 1860, vol. vi., p. 57: "History is an epic composed in the mind of God: its two principal parts relate the departure of humanity from its Centre to the furthest point of distance, and their return. The one part is the 'Iliad,' the latter the 'Odyssey' of history. . . . Thus is the great purpose of the universe expressed in history."

nomena of the universe fit into a place ordained by God. That no one has hitherto noted the colossal humour of the "Theodicy" is the strongest possible proof of the extraordinary rarity of a sense of the ridiculous. In "Candide" Voltaire is certainly inimitably witty at the expense of Leibnitz's optimism; but even he hardly seems to feel the absurdity of a mortal's feeling obliged to hold the brief for God, and expend the greatest pains and all the resources of his professional skill in order to acquit his client of the charges brought against him, or, at least, to obtain a verdict of extenuating circumstances.

Rocholl[1] divides philosophic historians into the "theological," who see in history the handiwork of God; the "humanistic," who regard it as the work of man; and the "naturalistic-materialistic," who regard it as the work of nature. I will devote no more time to the theologians. They explain the course of history by the ordinance and Providence of God, who created the earth and mankind, and is directing them by wondrous hidden ways to a predetermined goal. For proofs of this fantastic product of their own brains they point to the Bible. They no longer look to it for their cosmogony, or uphold the story of the Creation in Genesis against the conclusions of science; but they still seek the key to history in the Bible, and look at human life as the medieval scholastics looked at nature. Like them, ignorant, blind, and arbitrary in their interpretation of the facts, which they are unable or unwilling to observe, they intentionally close their eyes to everything that contradicts their assertions.

[1] R. Rocholl, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

The desire for objective conclusions rather than subjective eloquence finds little more satisfaction among those whom Rocholl calls the humanists. There is no fundamental difference between them and the theologians, for they too assume the existence of a world ordinance and Providence without bringing forward a single proof in support of their assertion that could stand before unprejudiced criticism.

The reputation of Giambattista Vico, who is commonly regarded as the first philosophic historian who was not a theologian, stands especially high. Goethe, Johannes Müller, and Fr. A. Wolf had a high opinion of him. In his Preface to Hegel's "Philosophy of History," Edward Gans [1] says: "There are only four truly philosophic historians—Vico, Herder, Fr. v. Schlegel, and Hegel." Vico, the earliest "truly philosophic historian," did, as a matter of fact, regard himself as a discoverer, for he calls his book "A New Science of the Common Nature of Nations," [2] and claims to expound the principles of this science. These principles are as follows: "Belief in a divine Providence, the moderation of the passions by the institution of marriage, and the doctrine of the immortality of the soul consecrated by the use of burial." [3] History cannot teach faith in the divine Providence. Where was this Providence when Greece was given over to the plunder of the rude

[1] G. Wilh. Friedr. Hegel's Works, complete edition, edited by a band of friends of the deceased, vol. ix., "Lectures on the Philosophy of History," edited by Dr. Edward Gans, Berlin, 1837, Preface, p. x.

[2] "Cinque libri di Giambattista Vico de' principj d' una scienza nuova d' intomo alla natura delle nazioni," second impression, Naples, 1730.

[3] Vico, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

Romans, when ancient civilization was blotted out by the race migrations, when the Anglo-Saxon England of Harold was handed over to the Norman freebooters, when Europe was laid waste by the Mongolian Ojenghis Khans and by the Black Death? How did it permit Alba to carry out what he did in the Netherlands, permit Henry IV. to be murdered by Ravaillac, allow the Thirty Years' War to ravage Germany, and take sides with oppression against freedom in 1849? Such a list can be almost indefinitely extended. If there be a Providence at work in these cases, its actions are not governed by what mortal men understand as justice or morality. It is no proof of the immortality of the soul that savages believed in it, and therefore ceremoniously interred their dead. As for the second principle—the " moderation of the passions by the institution of marriage "—it has nothing to do with the philosophy of history, for it throws no light on any historical event. Moreover, it is false. Marriage did not arise and develop with the object of " moderating the passions." It was a social institution, devised to strengthen the family and insure the inheritance of property by the heirs of him who had acquired it. Its origin lies in the economic conditions of the law of property, and is neither physiological nor moral. Throughout the course of history there is only one instance of marriage as a political question. In Rome full legal marriage—*confarreatio*—was reserved originally to the patricians, and could not be entered into by a plebeian. The plebeians fought long and bitterly to be admitted to the full marriage rite. But they did so not " to moderate the passions," but because the right of inheritance was confined to the children of such a mar-

riage. The plebeians, in fact, sought through *confarreatio* for that full right of inheritance that the patricians reserved to themselves. The question was thus one episode in the century-long struggle for supremacy between the orders; it reappears nowhere else. To regard it as a determining factor in universal history, as Vico does, is absurd.

Even his famous conception of the *ricorsi*,[1] the continued recurrence of human events, is really very limited, and founded on an extraordinarily restricted basis of fact. For the origin of his view he produces only one fact: the similarity between the origin and development of the medieval feudal systems and the foundation of Rome. Even were the comparison of the two phenomena a just one, which is far from being the case, such a single instance of the occurrence of parallel development would be far from justifying the predication of a universal law of the " recurrence of human events." There is something far more impressive in the old Greek theory of the eternal cycles encompassing the whole universe. Vico's little *ricorsi* are but parodies of the cycles of Empedocles, Zeno, and Aristotle.

Vico's book teems with eccentricities. He divides history into three periods—the divine, the heroic, and the human. In the first period the earth was inhabited by mighty giants, still in direct relation to God. In the second the heroes ruled, whose exploits are recorded in folk-lore and to whom the nobility traces back its descent. Humanity is at present in the third stage. Yet this fairy-tale has had considerable effect. Auguste

[1] Vico, *op. cit.*, book v., " Del ricorso delle cose umane," pp. 428 *et seq.*

Comte's three phases of development—theological, metaphysical, and positive—were undoubtedly suggested by Vico's three periods. And the twaddle of Gobineau about the heroes, sons of kings, who are called to lead the populace is but an echo of Vico's description of the heroes of the second period.

As Werner [1] correctly observed, Vico did, as a matter of fact, "like Bossuet, emphasize the providential guidance of history and the fundamental importance of the religious element in it." In other words, he is orthodox, like Bossuet and St. Augustine, and drags into history the improved theological assumptions of a divine ordinance of the world and predetermined goal of human development.

He puts his doctrine in a nutshell when, at the close of his "New Science," he remarks "that God rules men and reveals His true light to mortals in flashes." This idea that the action of men is ordered by God, of whose will they are but the unconscious instruments, is repeated by Kant in his "Idea of a Universal History from the International Point of View." He says, in the Introduction, that since "death, birth, and marriage appear to be governed by calculable laws, individuals and nations, while imagining themselves to be following their own opposing purposes, are really, without being aware of it, under the guidance of a great natural design." What a logical summerset! If we are to look for design and will in every regular phenomenon, the ebb and flow of the sea, which appear "to be governed by calculable

[1] Professor Karl Werner, "On Giambattista Vico as a philosophic Historian and Founder of the New Italian Philosophy," Vienna, 1877, p. 22.

laws," must be obeying a design foreign to themselves. Such obviously is not the scientific view of tides.

Edward Gans' second "truly philosophic historian" is Herder. His "Idea of a Philosophy of Human History" was greatly admired on its appearance, regarded at the close of the eighteenth century as a textbook of the subject, and respectfully quoted to this day. It is, however, hardly readable now, as much on account of its form as its subject. It is written in an ornate and florid style. Turgid declamation is varied by rhetorical invocation of the subject in hand—"Fare ye well, ye wild regions beyond the mountains . . . it is under another aspect that we shall see most of you again. . . ." "Tone on, mystic harp of Ossian; fortunate the man in any age who obeys thy soft tones." "I bow reverently before thy lofty form, thou head and founder of an empire based on such noble aims," etc. His point of view is that of a childlike theology. Everything that meets his eye must have a rational, human purpose. Everything betrays the wise design of an omnipotent Creator. Man is created upright, in order "to direct his thoughts and wishes towards heaven."[1] Apes have been denied the gift of speech, because they would have misused it. "Speech would be dishonoured in the mouth of the coarse, sensual, brutal monkey, who would undoubtedly ape human utterance with half the intelligence of man. A horrible mingle of human tones and monkey thoughts—no! human speech could not be so degraded. Thus the monkey was made dumb, more

[1] Johann Gottfried von Herder, "Idea of a Philosophy of Human History," Introduction by Heinrich Luden, Leipzig, 1812, vol. i., p. 120.

dumb than any other animal." [1] "The sole effect of the cold on him (the inhabitant of the North Polar regions) was to bow his body and constrict the circulation of his blood. . . . But his vital forces, working from within outwards, built him up for warmth, toughness, and compactness, rather than for height. . . . His hair remained stiff and straggling, since his sap was not constituted to grow soft, silky hair." [2] Such pearls occur on almost every page. Herder constantly reminds one of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, who said of the melon, in his "Harmonies de la Nature": "It is externally divided into sections, because Nature intended it for family eating!" In his "Democritus," Weber introduces a ribald German, who humorously parodies the easy way in which the pious explain phenomena by saying: "How wise of Providence to have made holes in the cat's fur just where the eyes are!"

Herder sees a purpose in history, and expresses it briefly and concisely: "The purpose of human nature is humanity." [3] This revelation recalls the profound economic explanation which Fritz Reuter makes his inspector Bräsig give for the poverty of the country-people: "The people's poverty is due to their necessitous state." "The purpose of human nature is humanity." What, then, is humanity? Herder does not omit to answer the question: "Humanity is reason and reasonableness in all classes and all human affairs." [4] Now we know. Alexander conquered the Persian Empire, Rome subdued the known world beneath its yoke, Western Christendom instituted the Crusades, Spain colonized

[1] Herder, *op. cit.*, vol. i., p. 132. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 198.
[3] *Ibid.*, vol. ii., p. 220. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 243.

South and Europe North America, Napoleon made the last first all over Europe, in order that "reason and reasonableness might prevail in all classes, in all affairs." Herder hastens to snub anyone who doubts "that a design of this kind can be the sole purpose of Providence for our race. The fact is self-evident." [1] Only a perverted mind can doubt a fact that is "self-evident."

The whole book is a welter of words without the smallest kernel of meaning. A few examples will suffice of his constant concatenations of words that appear to be full of deep meaning, and really express nothing at all when one looks into them: "The more the muscular energies enter the domain of the nerves they are captured by the organization, and compelled to serve the purposes of sensibility." [2] "The genetic force is the mother of everything upon the earth; climate can only assist or hinder it." [3] "Nature has expended all her store of human types upon the earth, in order that she might deceive mortals throughout their lives by providing for each his own delight at his own time and at his own place." [4] "Epochs are linked together by virtue of their own nature." [5] Herder does not explain a single historical event. He orders and describes them one after another, and thus preserves an appearance of logical consequence. It would be impossible to understand how such a mass of arbitrary and often senseless propositions, and a kind of florid fine writing that is particularly intolerable in what purports to be a scientific book, could ever have been taken seriously, if it were not to some extent explained in Book XVII. In that

[1] Herder, *op. cit.*, vol. ii., p. 302.
[2] *Ibid.*, vol. i., p. 81.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 265.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 335.
[5] *Ibid.*, vol. ii., p. 249.

book Herder speaks of the origin of Christianity, the nature of Christ and of His doctrines, with the intellectual freedom of a rationalistic child of the age of enlightenment. Such outspokenness on the part of an official naturally made a profound impression on the cultivated classes in Germany, who were for the most part still confined within the limits of a narrow orthodoxy that looked askance upon the Christianity of Rousseau's Savoyard Vicar. But to designate Herder's "Ideas" as a philosophy of history is an irritating deception.

Edward Gans' third "truly philosophic historian," Friedrich von Schlegel, need not detain us. Many decades have now elapsed since any sensible man troubled about the dismal twaddle of that reactionary fanatic. But the fourth, Hegel, cannot be so readily dismissed, since his influence has not yet completely disappeared. Barth, who is not on the whole a Hegelian, says in his Preface to Hegel's "Philosophy of History": "However deservedly and completely Hegel's logic and Natural Philosophy may be forgotten, certain elements in his general intellectual position, which are practically developed in his 'Philosophy of History,' do still stoutly hold their ground, not only in Germany, but also in England, America, Italy, and even France."[1] Edward von Hartmann declares that "Hegel's philosophy of history has not yet been superseded," and says that he regards "the 'Philosophy of History' as Hegel's most permanently valuable contribution." Hermann was a pupil and disciple of Hegel's, without any individuality

[1] Barth, "The Philosophy of History of Hegel and the Hegelians down to Marx and Hartmann: a Critical Study," Leipzig, 1890.

of his own; it is therefore small matter for surprise that he eulogizes him in terms of absurd exaggeration, calls him the "founder of a systematic philosophy of history," and his theory "the only one worth considering." [1] In the same way, when Arnold Ruge calls Hegel "the greatest and freest intellect of our time," [2] one has to remember that Hegel was his master. But even Flint, who had no personal relations with Hegel, and who has criticized him, though very sparingly, declares: "It is quite impossible to deny him an extraordinary wealth of thought of the most profound and delightful kind." [3]

Let us examine one or two of the profound and delightful thoughts which find a place in the "Philosophy of History." Hegel's philosophy of history rests upon a single postulate: "The contribution of philosophy is solely . . . the simple thought of reason, reason as governing the world, the world process as a rational process. . . . That reason is revealed in the world, and nothing else is there revealed except it, its honour and its glory—this is what has been proved . . . by philosophy, and may here be assumed as proved." [4] Nothing could, in fact, be more convenient. Hegel's sole postulate is that history is a rational process. But this postulate is, in fact, precisely the *thema probandum;* if we are ready to postulate it, to take it as proved, we need no philosophy of history. But let us follow Hegel a step

[1] Hermann, "Philosophy of History," Leipzig, 1870.

[2] Henry Thomas Buckle's "History of Civilization in England," German translation by Arnold Ruge, fourth authorized edition, Leipzig and Heidelberg, 1871, vol. i., p. xiv.

[3] Robert Flint, "The Philosophy of History in France and Germany," Edinburgh and London, 1874, p. 496.

[4] Hegel, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

farther. History is understood "as the impulse of the spirit to find the Absolute—that is to say, itself." Thus, Hegel knows there is a spirit; and it has obviously lost itself. We are not told where and when this rather incomprehensible misfortune took place. But, anyhow, the poor spirit then felt a very natural impulse to find itself. Through this impulse it created the history of the world, in the course of which it happily did find itself. The process is not very clear, but the result is satisfactory. And empty nonsense like this passed, and frequently still passes, for profundity! The goal of history is freedom. "The history of the world is simply the development of the conception of freedom." This looks promising. But Hegel hastens to add: "Objective freedom involves the subjection of the accidental will, which has only a formal existence." [1] What does all this amount to practically? A man wills something: for example, to start a school where there shall be no religious teaching. He imagines that freedom consists in being able to carry out his will. Hegel shows him his mistake. His will has only a formal existence (this statement has no meaning, though it makes one stop and think); it is accidental; he must give it up; the police will prevent his opening a free-thinking school, and that will be real objective freedom.

And the details of Hegel's "Philosophy of History" are equally remarkable. It ought all to be quoted, for there are pearls on every page. "Europe represents finality in the history of the world." [2] Let us hope that America will take no offence at hearing this: "America has shown, and does still show, a complete lack of

[1] Hegel, *op. cit.*, p. 446. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 102.

physical and intellectual power." [1] "The subjection of the Asiatic kingdoms to the European is inevitable." [2] This judgment will no doubt convince the Japanese of the great significance of the Hegelian philosophy. "The advantages of connecting the Mediterranean with the Arabian Gulf and the Pacific are less than might have been believed, since the difficulties of navigation in the Red Sea are aggravated by the prevalent north wind, which renders it impossible to sail from south to north in all save three months of the year." [3] Lesseps, however, was not a Hegelian, and he did not do so badly with his Suez Canal. "Greek life is essentially youthful, and was begun by one youth, concluded by another. . . . It started with Achilles, the embodiment of poetic youth, and was brought to a close by Alexander, youth in its reality." [4] This is very subtle, but softly—did Greek life really begin with Achilles, and did it not go on for at least a century and a half after Alexander the Great? And since Romulus was a youth, and Romulus Augustulus another, was not Roman life also begun by one youth and ended by another? And is not the whole Hegelian phrase, for all its pretentiousness, devoid of real meaning and value? "This principle (Christ) is the pivot upon which the world rotates. From it history starts and to it returns. God is subject, Creator of Heaven and Earth, yet it is not in this power that revelation consists, but in the Sonship by which He has differentiated His own personality. Spirit exists only in so far as it is conscious of an object, and of itself as object. Thus that Other which God sets outside of

[1] Hegel, *op. cit.*, p. 77.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 210.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 147.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 232.

Himself is Himself; and in His contemplation of Himself as Other, love and spirit exist. We are aware of God as spirit when we are aware of Him as Three in One, and it is from this principle that the history of the world has developed." [1] And this is what is put forward as the philosophy of history—these ravings that might have fallen from the lips of a delirious monk whose brain was fevered by the writings of the Dominicans. Hegel is indeed one of the most appalling figures in the intellectual history of the human race. Not on his own account—there have always been cobweb weavers, and many of them have wrapped their threadbare thought in a magnificent diction of their own invention—but because of his influence on his contemporaries. One is almost impelled to believe that the faculty of judgment either does not exist in man, or is never used by him, when one realizes, after reading the works of Hegel, that this oracular utterance of a tissue of unmeaning phantasies, this ignorant jugglery with unreal and arbitrary words, called concepts, was received, not only by Germany, but by the world at large, as a revelation of the most profound wisdom; finds, too, the Hegelian dialectic, with its arid and valueless formulæ of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis, accepted by a whole generation as a law of thought,[2] and Hegel still regarded as a great thinker, and named with pride by the German people. The incapacity of the vast majority of mankind to apply

[1] Hegel, *op. cit.*, p. 330.

[2] Krause could say, in Hegelian style, "The old world is the thesis, the new world the antithesis, and Polynesia the synthesis," and must be excused for having once taught, in the good old student days, "Thirst is the thesis, beer the antithesis, and the synthesis under the table."

the tests of intelligent criticism or discover the meaning of words is indeed sufficiently proved by their acceptance of the dogmas of positive religion. But the crushing significance of Hegelianism lies in the fact that it was precisely the most learned and distinguished men of his time who fuddled themselves senseless with his frothy beverage. Even his critics, Trendelburg ("Logical Investigations"), Ulrici ("Principles and Methods of the Hegelian Philosophy"), and Heinrich Leo ("Hegelinge") are all slaves of the word. They talk round about Hegel, make some small reservation here, some slight objection there, raise their eyebrows, lay finger on nose, without seeing that they are all expending their energy on a soap-bubble, as the Hegelian philosophy was correctly described by Schopenhauer.

The four "truly philosophic historians" selected by Edward Gans are really indistinguishable from the philosophic theologians, whose history is concerned with the four world kingdoms of the prophet Daniel, the six days of Creation, and the Sabbath of Genesis. The brief and concise quotation from William von Humboldt which Hegel chose as motto for his "Lectures on the Philosophy of History"—"World history has no meaning without world government"—contains in eight words all the wisdom which the so-called philosophic historian spread into so many volumes. The man who thirsts to know, to understand, asks, "What is the meaning of all this human activity recorded in history?" He receives the unctuous answer: "God has His own designs for men, and they fulfil them without knowing it." He who is not satisfied must go empty away.

However, since the days of antiquity, there have

always been a few isolated thinkers who did not feel that either human destiny or the existence of the universe and of natural phenomena was satisfactorily explained by this reference to God. They observed human affairs closely and without prejudice, and since they found no indication there of a common purpose, they forbore to ascribe to history such a purpose as would solve its riddles, and confined themselves to searching for its causes. In Hippocrates' treatise on "Air, Water, and Places" is the first recognition of the relation between human beings and the places in which they live. From the time of the Father of Medicine onwards the influence of the climate and the condition of the soil upon men and their historical development has been brought forward as a subject for constant investigation. J. Bodin [1] recognized it as the determining factor in all historical events, and quoted Galen and Polybius, who "affirmant æris temperiem necessario nos immutare" "state the necessary effect upon us of the temperature of the air." The excessive importance ascribed to climate by Montesquieu exposed him to the ridicule of Voltaire. Nevertheless, both Turgot, and later on Herder, devoted much time and attention to the question, and Karl Ritter made it the turning-point of his geographical teaching.

There is no doubt that man is influenced by his surroundings. But it is an error to see in them the sole explanation of his actions and development. Bagehot's [2] argument against those who overstate the importance of

[1] Joannes Bodinus, "Methodus ad Facilem Historiarum Cognitionem." *Cf.* also Henri Baudrillart, "J. Bodin et Son Temps," Paris, 1853, pp. 150, 151.

[2] Walter Bagehot, "Physics and Politics," London, 1872.

climate is irrefutable. He shows that in the Indian Archipelago and in Australia two distinct races are found inhabiting the same island, and draws the correct inference that the cause of their different peculiarities cannot be found in the climate, which is the same for both. An even more illuminating instance can be given. The climate of North America has not substantially altered in the last four centuries. About 1500 America was a wilderness swept by bands of barbaric warriors in a rudimentary stage of civilization. By 1900 civilization there had reached the highest point known. New men, in fact, had come and created a civilization such as could not have been created by their savage forerunners. In this case climate has had nothing to do with the explanation of the change. To the objection that civilization as it exists in America to-day is not of native growth, but an importation from Europe, and that the influence of climate is exerted on the origin and not on the spread of civilization, one can reply that the wandering of peoples from country to country and continent to continent constitutes an essential stage in history, to which many important events in the development of States and institutions, and much in the existing condition of Europe, America and Australia must be referred. If the influence of climate is to be excluded from the wanderings, because they neutralize its effect, it can no longer be regarded as a determining factor in far the greatest portion of history.

This cuts the ground from under the feet of T. H. Buckle. Buckle collected a mass of valuable particulars, wrote most useful chapters on the insubstantiality of metaphysics and theology, on the falsity of the assump-

tion of a free will, on progress and its conditions, and the childishness of the older school of historians. He has done solid and suggestive work on certain sections of English history; but his initial assumption that the one determining factor in the fate of nations is climate and the conditions of the soil, is an obvious fallacy. "If," [1] he says, "we consider man's constant contact with the external world, we shall be convinced that there is an inner connection between the actions of man and the laws of Nature." This is correct. But the "laws of Nature" must not be limited to climate and the conditions of the soil. All the laws of Nature affect man, and among them those, indeed, principally that govern his thought and feeling. There is no doubt that mankind was originally, like every other sort of living thing, a product of the external conditions under which he had to live. But, once adapted to the universal conditions of existence on this planet, his action is far more governed by acquired characteristics than by the peculiarities of different localities. Auguste Comte is nearer to the truth than Buckle when he says: "The history of society is dominated by the history of the human spirit." [2] As a matter of fact, all human activity is determined by the human spirit, which finds its stimuli in human needs. It is here that we seek in the last resort the key to all action, whether individual or general—that is, to history itself. Comte's famous division of human development into three stages, called by him theological, metaphysical, and scientific, based as we have seen on an idea of Vico's,

[1] Buckle, *op. cit.*, vol. i., p. 31.

[2] Auguste Comte, "Cours de Philosophie Positive," Paris, 1839, vol. iv., p. 460.

is arbitrary in so far as it suggests a stern succession in events really contemporaneous.

In the theological period man's thought is animistic and anthropomorphic: he endows Nature with life, and personifies its phenomena, and invents gods. In the metaphysical his thought is deductive: he approaches phenomena with definite hypotheses, in the light of which he connects and co-ordinates what he sees. In the scientific, finally, he proceeds by induction, observation and experiment, and adapts his thought to the conditions of reality. It is, of course, possible that at some remote period in the past all thought was theological or metaphysical in form, although there are many indications that there have at every time been a few men whose thought was scientific and conditioned by the actual. One thing is certain: that even at the present day the vast majority are still in the theological and metaphysical period, and only a tiny minority has reached the scientific stage. Comte's division is only valuable as a historical explanation in so far as it throws a certain light on the processes and development of human thinking, and on the ignorance, superstition, and error at the root of so much human activity. It is true that mankind was originally profoundly ignorant, and acquired any knowledge only by a slow and painful effort. But the establishment of this fact, and the discovery of nomenclature to describe it, does not in itself entitle Comte to be regarded as a philosophic historian.

Karl Marx is in one sense the antithesis, in another the complement, of Auguste Comte. The latter centres the whole mechanism of history in the human spirit, of whose movements it is the effect; the former views all

historical events merely as the result of man's endeavour to supply his immediate physical needs. According to him, the law of property determines all the forms of society and the State. The desire for possession is the driving force in human activity, and the struggle for earthly goods at once the goal of all politics, the meaning of all institutions, and the cause of every legal suit.[1] Vico had regarded history as substantially a conflict between rich and poor, although he admitted the force of other considerations. Marx is certainly on the right track in looking upon man's needs as the cause of his actions, but he makes the mistake of conceiving of need in too limited a sense. It is not enough for a man to have his hunger and thirst satisfied, and his body clothed and adorned; he has intellectual and spiritual needs that are as a rule far more acute than his merely vegetative ones. The critics of the Marxian view of history have pointed to numerous important events that cannot without violence be referred to strictly economic causes. Alexander's conquests, the occupation of Spain by the Moors, and the seven hundred years of war there against their domination, the Hundred Years' War between France and England, the Napoleonic campaigns, the Puritan settlement in North America—certainly

[1] Marx himself sums up his theory as follows: "The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society—the real foundation on which rise legal and political superstructures, and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social, political, and spiritual processes of life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but, on the contrary, their social existence determines their consciousness" (Karl Marx, "Criticism of Political Economy," edited by Karl Kautsky, Stuttgart, 1897, Preface, p. xi.).

none of these events originated in the acquisition or division of property.

With naïve anthropomorphism men believed that their desire to comprehend the meaning of life and of the world could be satisfied from the contemplation of the history of the world, although humanity occupies no larger place in the universe than any order of ferns or insects, and the history of mankind can go as far and no farther towards the solution of the riddle of the universe than the life and development of the polar bear or the cockchafer. The customary philosophy of history pretends to discover in the history of mankind an answer to the eternal questions whence, whither, why, and wherefore, and ascribes to it a purpose comparable to the crudest theological inventions of primitive man. This teleological philosophy of history has no scientific value, and may be completely neglected by any reasonable man. Less discreditable to human intelligence is that causal philosophy of history which neither finds nor seeks for any purpose in history, and is modestly content to investigate the causes of human action. Hitherto its results have certainly been very incomplete and dubious, and it has systematized no convincing explanation of the laws of human development and the course of historical events.

Every philosophic historian who is what is called materialistic—everyone, that is to say, who on principle refrains from the dreams or the delirium of metaphysics —tends to see man in one aspect only, and not man as a whole, as he lives, and moves, and has his being, as he suffers, seeks, and loses his way. This is true even of Marx, even of Buckle. But a philosophy of history

which thus fails to present the whole living man, with all his idiosyncrasies, is necessarily false. For it is this whole living man who composes the history which the philosophy of history has to explain.

CHAPTER III

THE ANTHROPOMORPHIC VIEW OF HISTORY

A TRUE understanding of the matter and meaning of history is not to be obtained either by the anecdotal method, which records events, and nothing but events, with the delight of the gossiping barber; or by the intellectual method, which seeks to discover causes and events, and explains them in a more or less childish, short-sighted, and arbitrary fashion; or the philosophical, which, while claiming to deduce universal laws, a general plan, direction, and goal from the multitude of individual instances, has really only introduced subjective preconceptions that are often of the most terrifyingly foolish kind. All these methods must fail, because all alike devote a diligence and devotion that is really pitiable to the study of the inessential, while their eyes are firmly closed to what is essential. The historian endeavours to realize the circumstances of an individual,[1] of a definite group or community, to discover by accurate investigation the exact condition under which a particular event took place. He tries to find the names of persons and places, dates and turning-points in a man's career.

[1] Thomas Carlyle, "On Heroes and Hero Worship, and the Heroic in History," Lecture I. (I quote from an edition in one volume; undated; Ward, Lock and Co.; p. 3): "For, as I take it, Universal History . . . is at bottom the History of the Great Men who have worked here."

But what is the object of all this concrete individual knowledge? It may afford æsthetic satisfaction, but not real knowledge.

If history is to be anything more than a mere collection of stories and tales, if it is to do anything more than while away the tedium of the reader like any other imaginative story, it must give a picture of the life of mankind: must show the means by which the human species has gradually occupied the earth's surface and established itself upon it, the ends at which it aims, the means by which it pursues them; the forces, internal or external, that determine its actions; the emotional and intellectual elements of its consciousness, the impulses that dominate the habits that control it, and the means by which it satisfies its needs. In one word, history, if it is to teach anything worth knowing, must not be the history of this or that individual, but of humanity.

The only point of view from which sound conclusions are to be obtained as to the action and existence of humanity is that from which it is viewed as a part by the natural order, and not apart from and elevated above it. Humanity is one among the animal species that contend together for the possession of the earth, or divide it among themselves, without disturbing competition; only it is, by reason of its more highly developed brain and nerves, more capable than any other of acquiring very favourable conditions by adaptation to, and alteration of, the given environment. What we want, then, is to observe its behaviour under the most varied circumstances, keeping attention focussed on attributes of universal significance, and not on such so-called "historical" facts as the Christian and surname of any

individual, the place and time of his birth, and the bench on which he sat at school before he got into trousers. Suppose we are investigating, not man, but some other animal species. To avoid transgressing into the regions of imagination, I will not say suppose an inhabitant of Mars came to earth, not with any such hostile intention as Wells ascribes to our planetary neighbours, but simply in order to inform himself about the ways and habits of the highest living species upon this earth. Let us rather take any animal species. For example, take the ants, which have been so lovingly and thoroughly studied by Huber, Forel, Lubbock, and Wasmann. We can watch them building streets and towns; see them engaged on warlike or predatory expeditions; see their domestic and family life, their social institutions, their class system, the animals they keep for milking, their cultivation of nourishing mushrooms. All this is worth knowing: it has a meaning and an interest for us. But would it occur to any investigator to record with painful exactitude the day and spot in a certain wood where the battle was fought between the armies of the *Formica rufa* and *Lasius alienus,* and the names of the leaders and heroes on either side; the duration of the reign of a certain queen in any heap, the manner in which the youthful swarms are driven from the parent heap, and when they founded new heaps, etc.? Had the students of ant life lost themselves in such tedious detail, and attempted to relate the lives of individual ants, and their accidental relationships, encounters, and adventures, instead of being held in high estimation for their knowledge of nature they would have been laughed at as fools, even had they written most poetical biographies of ants in

the approved anthropomorphic fashion. In so far as they were successful therein, our interest would have been aroused, not by ants, but by men dressed up and disguised as ants; and while we might once more have enjoyed the artistic creation, we should have acquired no knowledge. The ant student will recognize that every activity of the species under observation displays certain common traits, and responds in a certain regular way to given circumstances; that certain characteristics of sensation, will, and action are common to all the individuals composing it. He will then endeavour to discover the common element, and prove its constant recurrence amid the changing conditions of time and place, while he neglects the accidental individuals in whom the universal characteristics of the species happen to be expressed. In this way he can extract what is really worth knowing from the swarming activity of the ant, and give us an intimate knowledge of its life.

It may be objected that what he gives us is natural history but not history, and the two ideas must not be confounded. "History," says Barth,[1] "is the history of man as distinct from natural history: the distinction is more than two thousand years old." The distinction is artificial; it has no real existence. The answer to Barth's further statement that: "The first difference between natural and human history is that the former is concerned with the species, the latter with society within the species," is that society is the condition of the existence of the species, the form it has evolved in the struggle for existence, just as the ant-heap is for the ants,

[1] Dr. Paul Barth, "The Philosophy of History as Sociology," Leipzig, 1897, p. 2.

which do not live as isolated individuals, and that the one species can no more be described apart from society than the other apart from the heap. At least, beyond a certain stage in development, life in society is identical with the life of the human species. The ideas are inseparable; and there is no justification for the antithesis between the history and natural history of man.

Equally fallacious are the other apparent objections to the view that, in investigating and recording human development, the individual, as accidental, must be neglected, and attention devoted to the universal peculiarities of the human species that are displayed in individual action. The reason why the fate of any particular ant appears to us of no importance when we are studying the species biologically is simply that we are not ants. If we were, we should not be satisfied to know that wars have been waged, battles fought, and captives taken by different nations among the ants, and we should also seek to know the fate met by this or that ant in battle or slavery, and the details of this or that campaign. The inhabitants of Mars may view human history with the detachment with which we regard the existence of the ant; but since historical research is not, as a matter of fact, undertaken by Martians, but by men, it is natural that, instead of confining themselves to the observation and record of features of universal application, they should dwell on the accidental incidents of concrete persons, and enter into all the ins and outs of their earthly existence.

This fact involves the naïve admission that history, in so far as it clings to concrete events and individual action, does not contain objective truths of universal

application. Instead of affording scientific knowledge of the life of the human species, it tends to reflect the subjective emotions of attraction and repulsion. Sympathy with certain individuals, satisfaction or dissatisfaction with certain events, tends, in a word, to reproduce the psychical and emotional atmosphere of a stupid tea-party. In so far it is no more than a rather solemn form of gossip, and in no sense that natural history which it must be if it is to deserve the attention of earnest seekers after truth.

The attempt to regard the life of man in space and time from the same objective standpoint as that of the ant meets with another objection, that is brought forward more generally, and frequently with a good deal of feeling. It is said that to place mankind on the same level as any other animal species, high or low, is an insult to the dignity of man. The spiritual existence of mankind and of every individual man sets him in a world apart, with its own riddles to be answered and its own far-reaching truths to be discovered. Animal life offers nothing of comparable significance. This indignant claim is but a belated and impotent outburst of the same anthropomorphic vanity that once rose in wrath against the teaching of Copernicus: the idea that the earth inhabited by man was not the centre of the universe, but merely a subordinate member of a system regulated by the sun, a handful of dust lost in the endlessness of the All. Nowadays the idea of our planet as predominant is left to childish ignorance and obsolete theology. But there was another outburst when the comfortable assumption of the supreme importance and significance of the human race was again disturbed by Linnæus's in-

clusion of primates—apes, lemurs, and, oddly enough, even bats—in one order. It grew to a tempest when Darwin gave definiteness to the Linnæan idea by maintaining a blood-relationship between men and monkeys, which has since been proved by Uhlenhuth's biochemical experiments on serum reaction.

From the point of view of natural science it is proved beyond dispute that the human family belongs to a certain family of animals, and through it is connected with all animals, and probably with all living things. Big words may be used by those who fulminate against such a relationship, but the proofs of it are incontestable. It is therefore accepted that man is an animal like any other animal, so far as corporeal faculty and organic activity goes. But that is all. The consequences are not faced. Very unwillingly, and after long struggles, the geocentric conception was abandoned; with an entire disregard of logic the anthropocentric is still maintained. In spite of Darwin and Uhlenhuth, historians and historic philosophers still regard man as the central fact of creation, as the goal to which everything in nature works, and in which it finds its significance. Did man really dominate the universe, or even the earth, in this manner, every detail of his life and activity would acquire an importance to which that of no other living thing would be comparable. But it is not so. It is a childish illusion by which man tries to hold the field against the advance of science.

Human vanity and prejudice apart, the human species appears as one special form of life upon the earth and in the universe, influencing natural forces and the destiny of our planet no more and no less than an order of flies

or mosses. There are species enough on the earth whose influence has been far greater than man's upon the minutiæ that compose the external surface of our planet: its main lines remain unaffected by any of them. Tiny creatures, often invisible to the naked eye—foraminiferæa, bryozoa, coral polypi, shellfish, and crustaceæ —have built islands, heaped up mountains, created or transformed continents, directed winds and currents, determined the courses of streams, fixed boundaries to the ocean, and influenced the climate of whole regions of the world. Compared with this, all man's creations and transformations sink into insignificance. The few isthmuses he has dug through, the few canals he has constructed, the few tunnels he has made through the mountains, are puny undertakings in comparison with the vast stratifications of chalk and mussel-shells; and many a South Sea atoll shows more real creative effort, measured in miles, than any of man's undertakings. Were all life extinguished upon earth, there would remain far fewer traces of the former existence of man, after the stone, wood, and metal erections had rotted away from its surface, than of the animals, who are so much more numerous and so much more deeply fixed. And at the last analysis, human life, traced from its animal origin, through all the stages of its historical development down to its final inevitable extinction, appears as no more than an inessential episode of cosmic life: one of the countless epiphenomena accompanying the complex of eternal forces at work, and no more important than this or that flickering of the northern light, than the growth and subsidence of a mountain, the rise and disappearance of a comet.

No student of natural science now believes in the eternity of the earth and the planetary system. Observation of all the available processes of the universe compels the assumption of an endless creation and disruption of the combinations we call planets. The earth, like every other mass, body, sun, or solar system, had a beginning as such, and will have an end as such, whatever the movements may have been that caused it to come into being, that will continue after it has ceased to be. And man will not survive the earth. This is obvious except to the spiritualists, who believe that the species, incarnated in astral bodies, will be translated to another star when existence upon the earth is no longer possible for it. Long before the earth is dissolved into primary ions, long before it scorifies or freezes, all differentiated forms of life will, in all probability, be extinct upon it. This I hold in spite of a strong conviction that, however unfavourable natural conditions may be, man is capable of adaptations as yet undreamed of. But when the human race is extinct, when the last trace of its existence, the last bone, the last bit of human handiwork, has disappeared, and the earth has followed after the other stars in the eternal cycle of generation and dissolution, what, then, will be the significance of that human history the orthodox historian obstinately places above and outside of the processes of nature?

Such a consideration involves the standpoint of eternity; from which, of course, only the eternal can be regarded. Humanity, however, is finite. The views of a small portion of this finitude such as ourselves can only have a value when they are accommodated to our limited vision. Philosophically, we are entitled to an interest

in whatever happens to humanity, although we know that it must one day pass away, and with it all that thought of which it was the object; to an interest in whatever happens to ourselves, although we stand in the shadow of death, and the day must come when we shall cease to be, ourselves and all that we have felt and thought and made our intellectual possession. But this interest is various in its nature, as are the needs from which it arises and the satisfactions that it demands. We have seen that, when aroused by anecdotes relative to a particular time and place, it arises partly out of a natural feeling of sympathy with whatever affects human nature, and partly from the hunger of the imagination for anything extraordinary, excessive or surprising, in which case the interest is purely emotional and closely akin to the æsthetic. It is the beauty, not the truth, of the anecdote, then, that matters: a preference for the probable or the possible exists only in so far as the grown-up finds his æsthetic appreciation impeded by the doubt and difficulty created in his mind by an anecdote that is palpably fictitious. Schiller has expressed this emotional and æsthetic interest: "Only what has never happened never can grow out of date." It again explains why people cling more closely to stories of things "that have never happened" than to any well-authenticated narration of the dry bones of truth, and prefer the unreliable but brilliant historian, or, more properly, story-teller, to the conscientious investigator, who ventures on no statement of which he is not practically certain. But over and above this emotional and æsthetic interest there is another—the scientific interest—which has no use for concrete anecdotes of a merely entertain-

ing and moving kind, if they have nothing to teach and represent no general truth. I am not forgetting that even this intellectual interest is originally rooted in the feelings. It is, however, differentiated from the merely emotional, not only quantitatively, but qualitatively, and stands in much the same relation to it that artificial attention, directed by judgment, and will, occupies towards the purely natural response awakened by immediate sense impressions, and sustained by sensations and feelings. Ordinary history, with its tedious circumlocutions and disproportionate interest in what is inessential, appears wholly trivial from the point of view of such an intellectual interest, and the philosophy upon which it rests wholly false, in so far as it aims, not at drawing conclusions as to the origin and development of man, but at throwing over it a net of artificial fancies.

The inquiring mind of man, hungry for knowledge, and dimly aware that written history has hitherto failed to give it what it wants, has attempted in a number of different ways to get at the sources of real information. Thus, out of the desire to understand the whole range of man's natural history, there have arisen a group of special sciences devoted to the study of man. Anatomy gives instruction as to his structure, physiology as to the workings of his organic mechanism. In the course of their development these two branches have expanded into comparative anatomy and general biology. They have ceased to be sciences of man in becoming sciences of life in general, in which man takes his place beside many other living forms, and in so far they do not belong to our subject. A specifically human character was long

maintained—longer than by anatomy or physiology—by psychology, which tries to lay highroads across the world of consciousness. But it, too, has recently entered the wider sphere of animal psychology, thus following the universal tendency that directs all branches of the science of man that really have knowledge for their object to transcend the boundaries that limit them to him, and claim to be co-ordinated with universal being and the world as a whole, where man and humanity play but a subordinate part. Anatomy, physiology, and psychology have collected the positive material out of which a human science has already been built up—anthropology—which does for him what zoology does for any animal species. More dubious is the position of the subdivision of anthropology, known as ethnology, the study of peoples. It is a hybrid, half natural, half social science. Proceeding from the assumption that each people presents a definite unity created by nature, it endeavours to describe, and where possible to elucidate, the characteristics of peoples, the distinctions and resemblances between them, the changes they have undergone in time and place. But the assumption is not proved, and is very difficult of proof: it is far more probable that peoples are artificial and purely political creations, and that their origin, transformation, and destruction, slow though it may often be, is the work of man. Thus any description of them has no really scientific interest, and can teach nothing of mankind that is not more completely and searchingly revealed by anthropology. From this specious, fundamental error of regarding as a natural organism what is really the work of man ethnology naturally obtains a number of false conclusions: it

introduces preconceived opinions into the observation and description of peoples, characterizes them by factitious traits, and presents a false picture by means of statistical averages and audacious generalizations, all by way of deducing a national psychology that does not correspond with reality, and altogether is little adapted to the spread of knowledge. The extension of history into the unrecorded past has led to the creation of a special branch—primitive history—which differs from history principally in so far as, in the absence of any proved and provable evidence, it has of necessity to do without exact delineation of isolated events, the period at which they happened, and the persons actively or passively concerned in them, and to confine itself to the general features of the existence of human individuals and groups. Primitive history seeks to know the physical constitution of early man, his intellectual capacity and manner of speaking, living, feeding, and dressing, his progress in crafts, art and knowledge, his loves and hates, battles, alliances, wanderings and settlements; ignorance of the names of particular leaders, warriors and magicians does not disturb it. Any accurate knowledge of such names as might possibly come its way, by a collocation of circumstances that is indeed almost inconceivable, could add nothing to the edifice of primitive history, significant as it might be for the philologist. The results which it can give are a real contribution to the natural history of the human species, and not a mere rubbish-heap of anecdotes, in which what is essential is overlaid and hidden by what is unimportant. When the methods of primitive history are applied to humanity as it is in the present, and as records reveal it to have

been in the past, we have the history of morals; and when we leave the material forms and conditions of existence, and envisage the phenomena presented by the life of man in groups, and when regularly organized into societies, we see rising before us the science of sociology, new, and as yet confined within no strict limitations. Sociology does really deserve the name of science, since it investigates the laws expressed in the form and operation, the morphology and dynamics, of human life when organized in society and the State, and tries to understand how and why society and the State have arisen and assumed the forms they do as a matter of fact present.

The purpose of sociology is, by definition, closely akin to that of the philosophy of history, but there is between them a fundamental difference of method. Whether inevitably or no, the philosophy of history has, as a matter of fact, always been deductive, while sociology is inductive. The former is subjective dreaming, the latter the collection and arrangement of objective fact, from which the mere co-operation of a number of students tends almost automatically to sift out the subjective points of view which do undoubtedly exist. The one handles its facts with despotic violence, the other treats them with respect and deference. One can foresee that when sociology has fully mastered and analyzed its material, it will completely relegate the philosophy of history to a position alongside of dogmatic and apologetic theology, in that museum of human errors to which augury, astrology, the interpretation of dreams, and all the other silly games that once passed as sciences, have already been consigned. Wundt is a great thinker, but

when he called the philosophy of history the becoming, and sociology the being, of society, he was guilty of an artificial distinction between identical things that must, with all respect, be called a mere play upon words. An understanding of the being of society includes a knowledge of its becoming, and, conversely, becoming can only be understood from such a correct observation of being as shows it to have been determined at all periods of human history by the same forces and laws, those forces and laws which have also been the condition of becoming. To take an analogous case, the laws of geology were not understood until it was realized that throughout the past, as far back as the original formation of the earth, the same chemical, physical, and mechanical laws prevailed which are operative in this planet to-day, and that the most ancient strata were formed in the same manner as those which have just appeared beneath our eyes. Sociology is destined to occupy the highest place in the encyclopædia of human sciences, since it co-ordinates the results of all the rest; it is the keystone, maintaining and crowning their span; it is the completion of anthropology on the intellectual side.

Barth [1] sums up the relation between sociology and history in the dazzling formula: "History seems to me to be concrete sociology in the sense in which a drama is concrete psychology." This is only true within limitations. A drama is a poetic invention. It could only serve as a source for the serious study of human character were it that faithful reflection of actuality which it practically never is, even when the poet has genius

[1] Dr. Paul Barth, "The Philosophy of History as Sociology," Leipzig, 1897, p. iv.

enough to penetrate the hidden depths of character, and instinctively divine the complicated interaction of the forces at work there. Zola imagined, when he plunged his invented characters in a flood of invented action, that he was following the method of Claude Bernard, and making scientific experiments. His "experimental romances" are the outcome of this remarkable idea of his. Barth has some sort of experimental drama in his mind.

Certainly, however, it would never occur to any scientific psychologist to use a drama as material for research, and obtain from it any valid conclusions, even about the psychology of its author. History can only be called concrete sociology in so far as the historian is certain of the events which he describes, and conscious of the sociological mechanism that moves his human marionettes—two assumptions that have hitherto hardly ever been realized. But if Barth simply means that history, if correctly narrated, is sociological casuistry—is, that is to say, a collection of examples illustrating the laws established by sociology as governing the being and activity of man—one can agree with him, for to this extent the formula contains its own proof. Concrete historical narrative, that is to say, is only useful to enliven the austerity of sociology, to make it more attractive and less dull, and give it some æsthetic and literary charm. At the same time the true science of human existence cannot be concrete history, but general sociology. We may put it thus: Sociology is history without proper names; history is sociology made concrete and individual. The relation between them is that between algebra and arithmetic. The subject-matter

and content of each is the biology of the species, *homo sapiens*.

For sociology the present affords a more fruitful field of study than the past, because it can be more precisely observed with the aid of exact enumeration and measurement. At a pinch it could do without history, although it must be admitted that certain survivals are more comprehensible when we know their origin and the part they once played; but history without sociology is a mere collection of anecdotes or philosophical speculation, subjective and devoid of scientific value, such as deserves the contempt of old Sextus Empiricus, who called history ἀμέθοδος ὕλη, a confused collection of accidents.

When the existence and activities of mankind are once viewed in the right light, it is clearly revealed as one among many living species, but far more interesting than any of them, both objectively and subjectively, because it has attained the highest stage of intellectual development of them all, and because we ourselves belong to it. We comprehend that its destiny is conditioned by the development of natural tendencies under the pressure of the outer world. To arrive at any results about it, we must study it on the same plan and by the same methods that are applied to every other living species. Observation and its results are nullified by the introduction of any preconceived hypothesis for which there is no foundation in objective fact—for instance, that the human species occupies an exceptional position towards nature and the universe as a whole, and enjoys privileges shared by no other species—if, in fact, we are childishly enslaved by the anthropocentric superstition. Freed from this venerable error, we may profitably ob-

serve man, and construct an accurate picture of his nature from his behaviour under different circumstances. All knowledge of mankind, all anthropology in the widest sense, must be and subserve biology. This is as true of psychophysics and introspective psychology as of anatomy, embryology, and physiology. Sociology, too, is biological, and must, in so far as it claims to be scientific, follow the statistical method in its descriptions, and the psychological in its interpretation, explanation, and classification. History makes a useful contribution to the natural history of mankind only when, as a form of retrospective sociology, it throws light upon the universal characteristics common to mankind as a whole. Were its facts securely established and the psychology of primitive man accessible, it might complete sociology by means of a scientific account of development, which would settle the vexed question whether human nature has maintained its original qualities, its basic instincts, and typical reactions unchanged throughout the ages, or whether it, in the course of thousands of years, displays something more than formal adaptation—namely, real change and progress. But psychology remains the most important branch of the science of man. It is through his intellectual activity that man is distinguished from the other living creatures dwelling beside him on the earth; it is his intellect that must be studied if he is to be represented different, as he is, from all other living things. Psychology must supply sociology with an explanation of the phenomena of the common life of man: the rise and development of institutions, the nature and activity of the State, the forms of government, religion, law, morality, and national intercourse. For

all these departments of human life correspond to needs of human nature and an understanding of them depends on psychology, and never on history alone. John Stuart Mill enunciates this principle in his "Logic": "The explanation of historical phenomena lies in the laws of the human spirit"; and Herbart [1] expressed the same view almost at the same time: "There is no doubt that the forces operative in society are psychological in their origin." There is no use in knowing the visible origin of institutions, and the course of their development to existing forms, unless the intellectual peculiarities, needs, impulses, and efforts out of which they grew, and must have grown, can also be displayed. Only then can we begin to understand them. History can assist us to this knowledge in various ways. It can refer the complex phenomena to simple causes, such as can be fully penetrated and understood. It can remove the obscurity that hides their connection with definite human peculiarities and tendencies, by bringing forward a mass of examples to prove that man has always, at all times and places, been actuated by similar needs, and sought to satisfy them by the same method—a method always subject to the conditions of his own nature. At the same time, it can keep in sight certain exceptional situations valuable as experiments, because they are favourable to the display of certain psychic traits and peculiarities which remain in the background under the average conditions of life, and are therefore apt to be overlooked. Sociology and history, identical as concepts, are the product of human psychology, and from them we can obtain a retrospect of psychology itself. All the peculiarities of human

[1] Herbart's Works, edited by Hartenstein, vol. vi., p. 33.

nature, those most obvious and those most profoundly concealed, are displayed in the manner of his reaction, past and present, to impressions from the external world, and in the terms he has made for himself with life and with that world. The biologist who studies these peculiarities by the clear light of reason, unclouded by any mystic haze, can determine from them the laws according to which man has reacted on his environment, and must continue to react upon it so long as his nature does not undergo a complete change.

An exact scientific knowledge of the general concrete features of the life of the human species can only be acquired by the observation of great masses of instances—that is, from statistics. There is thus insight in Schlözer's witty epigram: "History is statistics in movement, statistics history in repose." But it is necessary to look away from the general to the particular so soon as the causes of phenomena are touched, and an explanation required of the how and why, as well as the what, of institutions, habits, etc. In other words, the natural history of man is psychology, and psychology is necessarily individual.

There is no psychology of the crowd. What goes by that name is an error, a word without meaning, or else the unimportant result of a multiplication of individual psychology, unimportant because addition or multiplication of a quantity does not alter its nature or convey any further information about it. Thus there is something paradoxical in the name of the new science of sociology, since it cannot be the science of society, but only of the individuals that compose society—that is,

only anthropology. We cannot approach society scientifically until we possess an exact knowledge of the component parts of which it is the sum.

Auguste Comte goes so far as to declare that the individual man absolutely does not exist; there is nothing but humanity.[1] He denies that the development of society can be deduced from the peculiarities of the individual. This opinion is shared by Wundt;[2] and even Ernest Mach, who would exclude metaphysics from philosophy, departs so far from this view as to conceive of humanity as a unified organism, "a polypus," whose members "have lost their organic relationships." Here he is drawing upon something that is not the result of observation. The characteristic that he introduces into the infinitely complex and perpetually changing picture presented by human beings, and called humanity, exists in his mind, not in reality.

Such propositions lead a superficial writer like Gumplowicz[3] to make the rash assertion that "science has done with individualism and atomism," although the most casual perusal of the literature of the subject shows that such a statement has no foundation. Simmel[4] says: "Nothing is real save the movements of the mole-

[1] Auguste Comte, "Cours de Philosophie Positive," fourth edition, Paris, 1877, vol. vi., p. 590: "From the static or dynamic point of view, man is really and fundamentally an abstraction; reality belongs to humanity alone."

[2] W. Wundt, "Logic," second edition, Stuttgart, 1895, vol. ii., p. 291.

[3] Ludwig Gumplowicz, "Principles of Sociology," second edition, Vienna, 1905.

[4] Georg Simmel, "Problems of the Philosophy of History," Leipzig, 1892, p. 39.

cules and the laws that regulate them. No peculiar law can be assumed as governing the sum of such movements when grouped together in a totality." Spencer [1] says the same thing: "A totality of men possesses the qualities that can be deduced from the qualities of the individuals. . . . The qualities of the units determine the qualities of the combination." H. S. Maine distinguishes the society of ancient from that of modern times. Previously the sociological unit was the family. "But the unit of modern society is the individual man." Lotze says in the "Microcosm": "The only active points in the course of history are the minds of living individuals." Schopenhauer ("Parerga and Paralipomena") says: "Peoples only exist in abstracts . . . it is the individuals that are real." Louis Blanc sees only individuals in history: "Individualism triumphed through Luther in religion, through Voltaire and the Encyclopædists in the intellectual sphere, through Montesquieu in economics, and through the French Revolution in the world of reality." No citation of authorities is, however, necessary to prove that individual men alone, and not a totality of men, whether it be called people, class, society, or humanity, represent reality for the natural history of man, which we have called sociology, or history looked at from a sociological point of view.

The notion of regarding the abstraction "humanity" as a reality must have come from theologians and metaphysicians, who are in the habit of regarding the spirits they have themselves created out of words as possessed

[1] Herbert Spencer, "Introduction to Social Science," Paris, 1880, p. 55.

of a matter-of-fact existence. In Ezekiel, chapter xvi., we find the first comparison of Jerusalem to a man who passes through childhood, grows up, takes a wife, is false to her, and is stoned to death; and it is done with the full consciousness of employing a merely poetic simile. But Cicero was taking the image literally when he found all the stages of human life reproduced in the history of Rome—birth, adolescence, youth, maturity. Seneca, the orator, was pleased with the notion, and borrowed it from Cicero. Florus in the Preface to his "Outline of Roman History," generalized the idea to all peoples, in whose life he found "quattuor gradus processusque"—the four stages and progresses of human existence—birth, childhood, youth, age. Ammianus Marcellinus was satisfied with repeating the words of Florus. St. Augustine goes a step farther. He no longer confines himself to a political form, such as a people, but sees the life of humanity as a whole as that of an individual man; its life, like his, as a progress from childhood to youth, maturity and old age. Whether he is comparing or identifying is not clear, even to his own mind. Sometimes he begins by premising that he is using a figure of speech, but, as his thought develops, he falls a victim to his own imaginative faculty, and his metaphor is transformed under his pen to a living organism of flesh and blood. Pascal, too, observes in the Preface to his "Traité du Vide": "We must look upon the continuity of the human race throughout the centuries as the continued existence and progressive experience of a single human being." He thought to throw light upon the path of progress by this fiction. It is, however, quite superfluous, since tra-

dition is handed on by each learned man to his successors, and the young are instructed by their elders. It is as easy to conceive of a progress of successive generations as of humanity as a single man profiting by the lessons of the experience he gradually accumulates. Auguste Comte boasted that his "positive philosophy" did, in contradistinction to all theological and metaphysical speculations, "subordinate imagination to observation."[1] But when, following the example of St. Augustine and Pascal, he rejects the individual and allows the totality alone to be real, he is maintaining a conclusion that is not obtained from observation, but simply and solely from imagination.[2]

Simplified by dull and superficial minds, Pascal's semi-rhetorical abstractions have suffered literal translation into a crude materialism. Infamous is not too strong a word for the performance of von Lilienfeld. With terrible seriousness, he takes society, or rather the State, as an actual organism in the literal sense of the

[1] Auguste Comte, "La Sociologie," edited by Émile Rigolage, Paris, 1897, p. 51.

[2] The image used by Ezekiel, Cicero, Florus, and St. Augustine is so natural and reasonable that it constantly occurred to writers busied with historical considerations down to quite modern times, without their being aware of their predecessors. There is obviously a close relationship between them and Vico and Fontenelle in the eighteenth century; St. Simon at the beginning, and Littré and Eduard v. Hartmann in the third quarter, of the nineteenth, who all speak of the life of a people or of humanity as resembling the life of an individual: and Fontenelle, St. Simon, and Littré *go further*, and *declare* that a people, like an individual, has in childhood only bodily desires; in youth it grows up to labour and develop the imagination in the form of poetry and art; in manhood it acquires intellectual maturity, and turns to natural sciences and to philosophy.

word, and proceeds to give an exact anatomical description of it. He displays the bones, joints, muscle, tissue and nerves, the circulation, the limbs, and the internal organs that nourish the creature and determine its functions. That it is born, develops, overcomes disease, grows old, and dies is obvious. Von Lilienfeld has not enough imagination to go farther, and tell us whether his State is an organism of the male or female sex, whether it marries and has children, or spends its life in unblessed solitude, and how its obsequies are celebrated when it dies. From his description, its anatomy is clearly that of a human being, or at least of a mammal. Here again there is a lack of imagination. There is no necessity to suppose the State a mammal. It might have been an articulated animal, a reptile, or a jelly-fish, any of which would have avoided many difficulties and been much more picturesque. Schäffle makes the same mistake, although he maintained later, in defiance of all probability, that his book, "Structure and Life of the Social Body," was not meant to be taken literally, but allegorically. In spite of Schäffle's recantation, Réné Worms maintained his earlier point of view, to which von Lilienfeld was faithful to the last.

It is humiliating to have to record that a group exists to this day which supports and cherishes the marvellous delusions of Schäffle and Lilienfeld, and even expands them—a group that takes itself seriously and is taken seriously by others, calls itself a sociological school, and dignifies its play upon words by the prodigious name of the "organistic method"—and that sociological congresses, struggling to be scientific, have, with the noblest intentions, gone so far as to enter into heated

discussions of what, after all, is mere play upon words, mere drawing of analogies.

Metaphors apart, to look upon society, State, and humanity as an actually living being is a primitive piece of innocence worthy of the village wiseacre who explains the northern lights as the train of sparks rising from the anvil, on which the axle of the earth is being repaired by the smith; or of the naughty schoolboy who plays at being a sea-captain, moving over the surface of the earth with an indiarubber fastened to the keel of his steamer in order that he may play a trick on the geographers by rubbing out the lines of latitude and longitude, and even the equator. There is something incomprehensible in this literal acceptance of a phrase, this incapacity to grasp a metaphor, this diseased desire to make a fetish of words.

The truth is that a number of men living together under the same or similar conditions are no more one living unity, one human being, in the sense in which St. Augustine, Pascal, and Auguste Comte use the word, than a number of locomotives collected in an engineering shop are one single locomotive. Human events are the outcome of individual human activity, the reaction of individuals upon circumstances originating in nature and the activity of other human beings; they are only explicable by a consideration of individual qualities. Every mass movement, be it a war, a rebellion, a crusade, a migration, a pilgrimage, is the outcome of the actions of individual men, concerted for that purpose, but capable of being regarded and estimated apart. Every institution and the functions connected with it—government and the duties of subjects, religion and the

observance of its rites, trade, credit, commerce, industry, and the organization of classes—all have arisen out of some definite human faculty which can only be studied in the individual.

I am fully aware that human beings are biologically interdependent, inasmuch as certainly all those who belong to one race, and possibly all those who belong to the species, are, in the last resort, related and descended from the same primal parents from whom they have inherited—not, indeed, as Weismann would have us believe, the actual corporeal germ-cells now living within them, but the tendencies transmitted through the germ-cells of their ancestors. This biological interdependence is far from involving an organic unity, in the sense in which the philosophic historian or sociologist who believes in the "organistic method" conceives it. For it is not limited to the human species; it includes the other animal species, and, presumably, all the types of life existent on the earth, in the present or the most remote past, from the unicellular organism to the most highly differentiated human being. From the philosophical point of view, the notion of such an interdependence of all living matter, of all life, is valuable; from the historical it is sterile, since an organic unity of the State and of humanity, which, so far as it exists, exists in virtue of the interdependence of the whole animal, and even the whole vegetable, kingdom, is in no sense the key to the comprehension of a single historical event, a single human institution. Paracelsus came much nearer the truth when he called each man a microcosm, a world in himself. In spite of the relationship existing between

human beings, in spite of the resemblance of members of the same species to one another, in spite of an interdependence not confined to members of the same type, but extending to all life and to the world in its entirety —in spite of all this, human actions can never be understood except from the point of view of the individual. For the organic impulses, in which human actions take their rise, always express themselves through the individual; it is by the individual that they are felt, in him they reach the surface of consciousness, in him they arouse motives, aspirations, ideas, and judgments giving birth to deeds. Unless investigation reaches down to these individual roots of human action and behaviour, no accurate explanation of the phenomena of the life of societies, people, and States can be obtained.

Few words are responsible for so much mental confusion as the psychology of the crowd and the psychology of nations. Scipio Sighele's [1] object in his standard work on "The Criminal Crowd" was to establish the fact that people will do things when they are gathered in great numbers that they would never do alone. The fact itself can only be asserted with reservations, and is capable of various interpretations. A lofty intellectual standard is not to be expected of a crowd, even of one composed of highly gifted individuals. The explanation is simple, and not at all mysterious. The union of numerous individuals in a crowd does not give rise to a new superindividual, possessing an intellectual equipment quite different from those of the units of which the superindividual is composed. High intellectual at-

[1] Scipio Sighele, "La Folla Delinquente," second edition, Turin, 1895.

tributes—attributes that are, by definition, above the average—are individually differentiated. Each individual differentiation, in so far as it is individual, instead of adding itself to every other, separates itself from it, and therefore neutralizes it. Thus there are left, after those attributes which are individually differentiated, and therefore higher, have neutralized each other, merely the average attributes common to all, which, of course, are on a lower plane. I have elsewhere [1] gone fully into the behaviour of the crowd. It does not, however, at all follow that, because a number of highly intellectual individuals will, when joined into a crowd, display but mediocre abilities, that a number of highly moral individuals will, when joined into a crowd, prove immoral or absolutely criminal. On the contrary, I most emphatically deny that a crime would be committed by any number of really moral men, however great. Any assertion to the contrary is arbitrary and incapable of proof. Crimes committed by crowds always originate with individuals who, as individuals, are naturally predisposed to crime. In a crowd, at any

[1] "Paradoxes," seventh edition, Leipzig, not dated, p. 31. Perhaps the only writer who credits the crowd with better judgment than a highly gifted individual is the tragedian Pomponius Secundus, quoted by Pliny the Younger in the Seventeenth Letter of his Fifth Book, who used, when his verdict on a piece differed from that of a trustworthy friend, to say: "Ad populum provoco"—"I appeal to the people." This is, however, really a question of an expression of feeling, not of ratiocination; and since feeling represents a less highly differentiated activity of the brain than ratiocination, the difference between the average crowd and the cultivated individual may actually be less marked in this case. In this sense only there may be some truth in the saying that *Monsieur Tout-le-monde* is cleverer than *Monsieur de Voltaire.*

rate, they find accomplices in other individuals whose more or less pronouncedly criminal tendencies are as a rule kept under by fear of consequences. The fact of numbers removes this check, and the evil impulse is stimulated by the knowledge that the individual is hardly ever punished for his share in crimes committed by crowds, because of the difficulty of bringing him to book. At the same time, the great majority of average people, being neither specially good nor specially bad, are apt, from their very lack of decided character, to imitate the example of someone else. When gathered into a crowd, they offer no resistance to the suggestions of a few ringleaders, and follow them like sheep. Of course, one would probably not be far wrong in saying that such average people, even when not gathered into a crowd, would probably obey any suggestion made to them, granted that the conditions were as remarkably favourable as are the rush, excitement, noise, and tumult of a concourse. And yet overheated brains would fain see I know not what amazing transmogrifications in this simple fact. With the mysticism so irresistibly attractive to weak intellects, they would fain understand, or misunderstand, Sighele's psychology of the crowd to mean that a crowd is a being apart from and independent of the individuals that compose it, possessing impulses, passions, thoughts and judgments of its own, and reasoning, feeling, and acting unlike any individual man. If one penetrates their wild and whirling words to the kernel of fact that lies behind, the absurdity of the assumption is patent. Where is the brain of this new and independent organism, that arises out of the gathering together of individuals into a crowd? Where

are these new impulses, passions, etc., situated? Does the new organism "crowd" develop a new brain and nervous system to express its new feelings, thoughts and actions? Even the mystical exponents of the so-called psychology of the crowd do not go as far as that. Even they assign to the crowd no more than the sum of the brain and nerve processes of individuals. What does this involve? Are the different phases of which any action is the outcome to be conceived as taking place in different individual brains? Does, for example, one individual or group of individuals receive sense impressions, another individual or group translate these impressions into perception, a third individual or group start the train of associations and call up in the consciousness the concepts, judgments, and emotions that accompany them, while a fourth individual or group finally obeys these stimuli and translates them into acts? The absurdity of the idea of such a psychic division of labour in producing a common product of the kind is obvious. Only in each individual brain can the psychic functions of the new super-organism "crowd" be carried on, throughout the whole chain that begins with the sense stimulus and is completed in the functioning of muscles and glands. It is mere folly to devote long words and high-sounding formulæ to pointing out the obvious truth that individuals do perceive, feel, think, judge, and act, whether alone or in a crowd.

A crowd, in the sense in which one can speak of its voice, its weight, its strength, has a psychology. That is merely to say that a thousand voices shouting make more noise than one, a thousand pairs of arms can raise heavier weights and do harder work than one, or that a

floor that would support the weight of one man quite easily may give way beneath a thousand. But psychically there is no more difference between a crowd and its component parts than between a thousand cannon and a single gun. In each case the dynamic effects, the actual results, are different; but it is the merest anthropomorphism to deduce from this difference a difference in the force that creates the effects.

An apparently reasonable basis for belief in the psychology of the crowd can be found in one direction only. In a crowd the individual is subject to an excitement such as he never feels when alone. This excitement impels him to feel, think, and act in a manner so different from that customary to him when alone that, on exchanging the crowd for solitude, he marvels at himself and at his having been able so to think, feel, and act. To this extent, then, one can speak of the psychology of the crowd.

The fact is correct; the inference false. What does it prove that a man feels, thinks, and acts in one way in a crowd, in another when alone? Only that the sight of a crowd, and the fact of being in it, excites him, and that his brain and nerves act in one way when he is excited, in another when he is at peace. But violent excitement is not caused solely by a crowd. It arises in many circumstances of the most varying kind, as with extraordinarily strong sense impressions, danger, or certain bodily states. The sight of a volcano in eruption, a huge conflagration, an earthquake, a battle, or a tiger out of his cage, will give a man feelings that do not visit him as he sits in dressing-gown and slippers by his own fireside. When suffering the pangs of hunger a man

will think, feel, and act rather differently from what he would do after a good dinner. Richard in love, or drunk, is a different creature from Richard cool and sober. Is psychology to be subdivided accordingly? Does the individual soul disappear in each of these instances, to be replaced by a new soul conditioned by volcano, conflagration, earthquake, battle, or encounter with a tiger, by hunger, love, or intoxication? Yet the assumption of the so-called disappearance of the individual in the crowd, and the rise of a new crowd-soul, is on the same level as these suppositions. To understand the feelings, thoughts, and actions of a crowd, one must penetrate beyond it to the individual. It is necessary to investigate his intellectual structure, and its reaction to any sort of excitement. The part played by his imitative faculty and receptivity to suggestions must be understood, no less than the instincts that slumber hidden in his soul, until something removes the bounds, conscious and unconscious, within which they are normally restrained, and they then burst forth tremendous.

This purely individual psychology is not advanced in the least by subordination to any so-called psychology of the crowd, which endows the mere word "crowd" with actuality, and bestows upon a figment of the imagination the qualities of a living being. In the same way verbal abstractions, such as wisdom, love, and pity, are personified by the artistic imagination and represented in the female form with all sorts of attributes. The psychology of the crowd is the psychology of an abstract concept based in fact upon a number of individuals. Either it has no material at all, or, since its

material consists of individuals, it must become individual psychology.

The psychology of nations, which was believed by its founders, Lazarus and Steinthal, to be a new and fruitful science, is as fallacious as the psychology of the crowd. Throughout long periods of time and all the vicissitudes undergone by their government, religion, and habits in the course of history, nations—or, at least, some nations—display certain permanent intellectual and moral characteristics that make successive generations of their people like one another and unlike other nationalities. Upon this proposition Lazarus and Steinthal base all their views and hypotheses. But the proposition itself is highly disputable. Is there, as a matter of fact, a difference between nations? Only the superficial observer will answer this great question off-hand with any assurance. The differences apparent at a first glance are of the most external character, such as language, dress, and social habits; go a little deeper, and you come to institutions, customs, methods of work, general views of life, standards of value, objects of aspiration. But the inner life of man lies beyond such differences as these, and remains unaffected by them; and in the common attributes of humanity, in which all men are alike, feeling, will, reason, and action, there is something far more fundamental than these superficial differences between nationalities. The Italian proverb which says "The whole world is like one family," comes far nearer to hitting the nail on the head than the profound endeavours of Lazarus and Steinthal to discover sharp differences at every turn. Exception may be taken, moreover, to the second half of their proposi-

tion. Is it a fact that, in the whole course of its history, each nation preserves a mental and moral physiognomy that gives it a defined individuality throughout hundreds and thousands of years? There are insuperable difficulties in the way of a conclusive answer. We have no reliable knowledge of the thoughts and feelings of the mass of the people in the remote or even in the recent past. Such evidence as exists is capable of various interpretation. Literature, laws, art, reflect the activity of a small minority or individual persons only; they tell us nothing of the masses. In the artistic delineation of a national character, that is supposed to have been the same throughout centuries, the principal part is played by preconceived notions of a subjective kind. This constructive psychology is not usually applied to small nations without any history, but to the more eventful and changing story of great nations. Given a certain *parti pris,* a certain object to govern the representation, rich history affords the artist in mosaic plenty of material for any picture he please. With a little sophistry it would not take much time or trouble to deduce two entirely different sets of characteristics for any nation selected at will. Fortified with examples from its history, the uncritical reader would swallow them both, though there would not be a word of truth in either. The method, or trick, is simple enough. By selecting certain events from the mass, and grouping them together to the exclusion of others, it is always possible to present a nation throughout long periods of time in the aspect in which one sees it oneself and desires to present it to others.

What, then, is the basis of the special character and

temper of a people? Is it physiological inheritance and a common descent? Of the great European nations with which the would-be science of national psychology has hitherto busied itself, not one shows a pure strain; there is a mixture of blood in all of them. All are composed of the same elements in different proportions. Why, then, should a mingling of the early European inhabitants of the Alps and Mediterranean have produced, as in France, a national character and soul different from that produced by the later Celts, Germans, and Romans in West and South Germany? The special physiognomy of a nation, in so far as it possessed one different from those of other nations, could not consist of such inherited characteristics as are organic, inborn and unchangeable, but of those externals that can be acquired and laid aside, and are thus capable of change. The notion of a special national individuality and physiognomy is, however, entirely in the air, one of those facile generalizations that lie at the root of so many errors and prejudices. The story of the Englishman who was waited upon in the inn, to which he went on landing at Calais, by a humpbacked chambermaid with red hair, and wrote in his diary, "French women have red hair and are humpbacked"—this story is a joke. But the dignity of science is claimed by the so-called psychologists who declare, on the evidence of a few Attic painters and sculptors, that "the ancient Athenians were a people of artists"; on the evidence of the suicide of Lucretia, "the women of early Rome were so chaste that they preferred death to dishonour"; on the evidence of Voltaire, "that the French are brilliant and frivolous"; on the evidence of the poet-Prince

of Weimar and the school of Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, "that the Germans are a people of thinkers and poets."

Lazarus and Steinthal looked upon the varieties of language as one of the strongest proofs of the organic differences between nations, and they lavished an enormous amount of ingenuity in tracing them back to, and regarding them as the direct expression of, national differences of thought and feeling. Their analysis of language as the expression of character is the most striking part of their work, for which it seemed to provide a really scientific basis. As a matter of fact, the argument is particularly insecure. Most of the languages spoken to-day were not created by the peoples who use them. For example, the Latin languages are spoken in Italy by Ligurians, Etrurians, and inhabitants of Northern Africa; in France by Celts and Germans; in Belgium by Walloons; in Spain by Iberians and Semites. The Slav language is spoken by the Turko-Tartaric Bulgarians and the Mongolian races of Russia; German is spoken by the Slavs in Mecklenburg, Lausitz, and the Mark, and by the Celts in the Rhine Valley; and so on. Although, for the most part, we know nothing of the prehistoric struggles, in the course of which some languages conquered and others were thrust aside, there is no doubt as to the fact of nations giving up their own language and taking on another. But in such a case how can language be called the outcome and expression of a special national spirit? If it expresses the spirit of the people that has created it, it is incomprehensible that the spirit of an entirely different people should find adequate expression in it. On the other hand, in so far

as the language can be adapted so as to form the entirely adequate expression of the spirit of any nation, or of a number of nations of different origin, it is not essentially conditioned by the peculiar spirit of the one that created it. If one and the same garment fits different wearers equally well, only one logical conclusion is open—either the wearers are of the same build or the garment does not really fit them. If the most different races can express their thoughts and feelings with complete satisfaction through the medium of the same language, either those thoughts and feelings must be more or less the same, or the language must be so adaptable to any and every thought and feeling that it cannot in itself provide the key to understanding the special character of any one people. Language, then, is no proof of the existence of national character, no source for the so-called psychology of nations.

At the same time different languages do exist which, though originally perhaps sprung from a single root, have developed according to different rules of pronunciation, grammar, and syntax. In the same way institutions and customs, though once, no doubt, the same for all mankind, have developed in many different directions. To investigate the causes of this variety of development is the right and the duty of any student of the human species, so long as he does not conceive that mere oracular utterance of the profound phrase "psychology of nations" is an adequate explanation. It is convenient to say "Differences in language, religion, government, and social institutions, in customs and moral ideas, depend on the differences of national characteristics and modes of thought deducible from them,

and subject to little material change in the course of history." But things are not so simple. On the one hand, descendants of a single race are seen dividing into several nations, widely differing in language, institutions, and customs; on the other, peoples, not demonstrably related by blood, are found speaking the same language and organizing their life on a common plan. These facts do not support the superstition that each people represents a race or type of the human species, possessing an organic character of its own, and in some sense a soul that determines the language, its policy, religion, etc., according to a certain norm. Rather one is inclined to see the types of human existence as determined, not by any such mysterious organic peculiarity, but by the state of civilization which they have attained. This stage depends partly on the influences of the external world, climate, condition of the soil, and natural resources, partly on less obvious circumstances.

The gaps in this picture must be filled up by the psychology of the individual, not by the adventurous psychology of nations. Each individual has certain mental characteristics common to the type and its distinguishing features. He is a creature of habit. He imitates what he has seen before him from his youth up. He is absolutely credulous unless a strong interest rouses his critical faculty. He loves the comfort of obedience to authority. A strong power of suggestion is exercised upon him by dogmatic assumptions.

The national differences, for whose explanation Lazarus and Steinthal invented the psychology of nations, can be fully accounted for by the undeniable characteristics of individual psychology. Some peoples write

from left to right, others from above downwards, others, again, from right to left; some burn their dead, others bury them, the position, again, varying between lying and squatting; some sit on the ground with their legs tucked under them, others on an elevated seat with a footstool and perpendicular back; some house under one roof with their animals, others apart from them; some dwell in straggling villages, others build in a circle. The reason is that they have always done so, and not otherwise, and see no reason for troubling to change their habits and discover new ones. And the same explanation holds of the higher range of peculiarities—speech, institutions, mental development generally. Of course, one may ask, How did the custom originate in the first instance? This difficulty presents itself at every attempt to reach the final cause of any set of facts. The psychology of nations does not settle it. A more illuminating suggestion is that all such habits as have not arisen directly out of the conditions of the external world date from the appearance of isolated individuals of sufficient creative power to discover something new and impose it on their fellow-men. Such mythical figures float vaguely in the recollection of mankind—Cadmus, Prometheus, Minos, Thor, Moses, or the divine heroes of whom Carlyle speaks in his first lecture on "Hero Worship." Two such heroic personalities fall almost within our own generation—Napoleon and Bismarck. The full light of history falls upon their life and activity, and reveals it to the intelligent understanding as a politico-sociological experiment on a gigantic scale. Within one generation a complete transformation can be seen taking place, in each of these two

instances, in the whole mode of thought of the upper stratum of society of two powerful nations. The peace-loving Frenchman of the eighteenth century, inclined to cosmopolitan views, and enthusiastically proclaiming Rousseau's doctrine of Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, was filled with Chauvinistic Imperialism of the most advanced type, drunk with glory, and revelling in the poetry of war. At the same time the sentimental, comfortable Germans of the Holy Roman Empire and the Confederation, rather petty and bourgeois in their ideas, and with little unity among them, disappeared, and in their stead there rose up the new Pan-Germanism, proud, hard and self-sufficient—or, at least, harsh and arrogant—bent on spreading its power over the world. What can national psychology make of this? What becomes of its fundamental notion of permanent national characteristics? The most prominent traits in the upper classes in France and Germany are certainly the fruit of the influence of two towering personalities—Bismarck and Napoleon—and not of any peculiarities of the French and German nations as such. This example justifies the conclusion that all similar peculiarities of a people or group of peoples arise in the same way—as the effect of some powerful individual, unknown to us, because partly prehistoric.

The psychology of nations has adduced no trait that is an organic fact, such as the brain index, bodily structure, colour of skin, hair, and eyes. As a matter of fact, the child of one people, brought up, educated, and dwelling in the midst of another, far from disturbing or alien influences, will display all the peculiarities of that other. If any proof be needed, it is enough to

mention the names of Chamisso and De la Motte Fouqué, Germans; Gambetta, Spuller, Waddington, Frenchmen; Becker and Hartenbusch, Spaniards; Arturo Graf, Italian; Petöfy (Petrovitsch), Magyar. The psychology of nations has no more real existence than the psychology of the crowd.

The real thing is the psychology of the individual, which teaches how man copies the world around him and regularly exercises his imitative faculty in every direction. This is one of the fundamental facts of history. Man is born with certain simple impulses, and grows completely into the external conditions around him. He therefore appears to display national characteristics so long as he bears the single impress of a certain set of conditions—so long, that is, as he remains at a stage of culture removed from the influence of active intercourse. This particularity is lost so soon as the individual is no longer rooted in the soil, when goods and ideas begin to circulate freely between peoples, and mutual influences overcome the barriers between states and the differences of language. To-day one hears already of the spirit of "Western and Central Europe," and European civilization is constantly spoken of; to-morrow the conception will be widened, and we shall talk of the soul of the white races. Nor can even this limitation be long maintained. Japan, India, and China are every day entering more fully into the intellectual life of the whites, and becoming imbued with their culture, methodology, ethics, and æsthetics. The Maoris of New Zealand don the frock-coat and varnished boots, and, with the Republicans and Socialists of Hawaii and the Philippines, begin to follow fast in the

footsteps of their yellow brethren, while Booker Washington seeks the admission of the negro to the cultured life. When complete intercommunication is established throughout all countries and races, and differences removed and universal similarity effected by the mutual interpenetration of civilizing forces, the conceptions of race and its psychology will cease to have any semblance of significance. A psychology of mankind will then become inevitable. We shall simply, after a wide detour, be brought back to the psychology of the individual. It will be seen that, morbid disturbances apart, men possess a common spiritual foundation over and above the individual differences caused by greater or less prominence of certain traits. The explanation of the fact that large groups appear to possess decided characteristics of their own, in so far as it is not due to the illusion of a prejudicial or superficial observer, lies simply and solely in the stage of civilization attained by them, and the decisive influence of example upon them. A super-psychology has no more existence than a super-soul. The collective organism is a mystical delusion. Collectivity is an abstract idea. Life and actuality are found only in the study of the individual. From the study of his feeling, thought, and action the natural history of the human species may be learned, and the results of such study are more reliable when devoted to the living than to the dead, of whose minds we are more ignorant than of those of our contemporaries and ourselves.

It is natural to us to desire the most complete and accurate knowledge of the species to which we belong. The means to such knowledge is observation, wholly

without bias, of the individual, and his reaction to the manifold influences to which he is subjected from birth to death. History may be a form of such fruitful observation as this, if it be retrospective sociology, in the sense in which I have tried to define it. I mean by sociology the exploration of the psychology of the individual, wherein lie the instincts and norms of human actions, and the origin of the institutions created by man as the framework of his life, or adopted by him because they existed and he sees no reason or no possibility of escaping from them. To a certain extent the particular individual selected for observation is indifferent, always provided that a sufficiently large number are observed to establish securely which traits are common to them all and which represent a divergence, more or less frequent or even unique, from the universal human formula. Theoretically, a complete anthropology could be built up upon absolute knowledge of living man. Practically, however, this absolute knowledge is unattainable. Gaps and obscurities there always are here and there, and, moreover, understanding of existing conditions is assisted by knowledge of those that have preceded them—that is, of their simple origins and their development, through increased complexity, differentiation, and automatism. History, therefore, cannot be omitted from a complete anthropology. Political and biographical history has a place side by side with primitive history and the history of morals in a complete anthropology, in so far as it throws light on events which are accompanied by unusual reactions, such as do not occur in every generation, and upon the extraordinary possibilities of mankind as displayed in remarkable

personalities, such as could hardly be suspected from the average type. To assist this knowledge of the type by striking examples is the object of history, which should be a museum of pre-eminent individual specimens, and a record of the behaviour of aggregates under circumstances that permit the peculiarities of the type to be clearly observed. In so far as it is anything else, or has any other object, it may possess æsthetic value as a work of art, but is wholly useless for science, and can be neglected by the student who aims at knowledge of the human species.

CHAPTER IV

MAN AND NATURE

MANKIND to-day appears to the observer as the highest and most powerful species on the earth; the globe is subject to man, and completely dominated by him all over its solid surface. The sea escapes him, but fisheries off the coast, in the shallows and the deep sea, give him control over some at least of its fauna. On the continent and in the air only those animal and plant species are permitted to live which are useful, if only to provide an æsthetic satisfaction, or at least harmless. Anything actually harmful, anything that demands precious space, is ruthlessly exterminated. Everywhere the beasts of prey that were once dangerous to man, and to some extent still are so in India and Central Africa, have had to retire before him. Unable to maintain themselves, they will disappear within a measurable space of time, despite sentimental efforts to maintain a few of them under the protection of man and preserve them for show. The smaller species that, without directly attacking man, are troublesome to him by reason of their numbers, proximity, or offences against his property, lie also under sentence of death. War has been declared on the rat, and in many places on the migratory cricket. It may be long and tedious, but there is no doubt as to the issue. The smaller the

enemy or disturber of the peace, the more difficult is it for man to make an end of him. Tigers and lions are easily overcome; greater difficulties are presented by poisonous snakes, rodents, and insects. In wood and field to this day he is more afraid of the wood-scarab and the weevil, the moth and the spider, the locust and the phylloxera, than the wild-cat, wolf, or plantigrade, and finds it more difficult to defend himself against the attacks of the anophelæ, stegomyia, and glossina which visit him with the scourge of intermittent fever, yellow fever, and sleeping sickness, than against the claws and teeth of animals of more considerable size. Even after he has cleared off the surface of the earth all the competitors visible to the naked eye, or subjected them wholly to his will, he will have to fight for safety, health, and life with microscopic enemies. In this contest he has to take the defensive; it will be far more protracted and far more difficult than any other he has waged all his earthly existence and struggle for mastery on this planet. Long after the jungle is as safe as the high street of a big town, man must walk in terror of tuberculosis, syphilis, cancer, leprosy, cholera, and other diseases caused by fungi and protozoa. But in the end, and that in no impossibly remote future, he will conquer even these foes. He cannot, indeed, exterminate them —the saprophytes will always be able to elude him, but he can keep at a distance those that cause disease. Then the continued existence of animal and plant will be determined by his good pleasure, the surface of the earth will be his, and man his only living enemy.

He has not always occupied this dominant position on the earth. Before his time it was inhabited by

mightier beings, whose fragmentary remains fills him with amazement and horror—the land and sea species of megalosaurus, which devoured animals and plants; the monstrous early mammals; the terrible primeval cats, with teeth that tore like swords; the racial ancestors of the beasts of prey, some of which existed within the lifetime of man. After these mighty organisms, that developed freely amid natural conditions that for them were highly favourable, man made his appearance, miserably small and weak in comparison with the brontosaurus or dinoceras, and insignificant by the side of the machærodus, that had the graceful form and pronounced colouring of the tiger. No physical attribute marked him out as the future conqueror of his predecessors and sole ruler upon the earth, except the comparatively large brain that set even the monkey-man above all earlier animal forces.

Man's original position was that of all those who shared the earth with him. He was cradled in conditions that favoured his life and development. Otherwise, had such conditions not been present, his species could never have arisen at all. He found the degree of heat, the meteoric conditions, and other comforts necessary to him, and he was well pleased. For him, as for all other creatures, nature spread her table with meat and drink for the trouble of taking. His only care was to protect himself against the superior foes whose quarry he was. Had these natural conditions remained unchanged, it may safely be assumed that man would never have risen above the stage of the larger apes to-day, in spite of the possibilities, obviously latent within him, starting, as he did, at the end of a line of

development characterized by a slow but continual increase in the proportion borne by the nervous tissue to the rest of the bodily structure. Certainly nothing is known of man in his earliest stages; but it can be unhesitatingly maintained that nature stood his friend and ally from the moment of his first appearance upon earth, while, like all the other creatures on earth, air, or water, he had enemies to face in the animals among whom he lived. But in the course of periods of time, whose duration cannot be exactly measured, this condition of things was changed, either gradually or rapidly. Over a great part of the area he lived in the climate changed profoundly from tropical or subtropical to arctic or semi-arctic. At the same time the relation of man to the surrounding world was transformed. Nature, his mother and friend, became his most deadly enemy. To defend and protect himself against her he had to turn to his fellow-creatures, and treat them no longer as prey after the fashion of the wild beasts, but as fellow workers and servants.

Climatic change did not affect man alone. It swept away all the other organisms that had shared with him the warmth of perpetual summer and found it necessary for their existence. Those to whom nature no longer supplied this essential element either went under or made great efforts to adapt themselves physically to new conditions, and succumbed after some struggle when they failed to do so. They grew a closer and warmer coat of fur; they altered their organs for biting and chewing so as to feed in a new way; they adopted new habits such as hibernation, breeding at certain seasons, and migrating at certain times; and as a result emerged

from their affliction very different creatures, accommodated to the new conditions of their natural existence.

Man, and man alone of living creatures, neither submitted to the sentence of death pronounced by nature against all the creatures to whom she denied the means for continued existence, nor directed his efforts to alter his corporeal organization to suit murderous natural conditions. He made some alteration in his diet, took to eating meat instead of the fruits, roots, eggs, jelly- and shell-fish that were natural to him; but in essentials he remained unchanged. He did not grow a fur coat. On the contrary, he lost the covering of hair that had not been a protection against the cold so much as a means of strengthening his skin and preserving it against insects, sunburn, and rain, and perhaps of adorning it. He did not harden himself to bid defiance to the open weather, after the fashion of the beasts of the fields and of the woods. He did not strain after the mane and claws of the lion, the iron muscle and complicated digestion of the cud-chewing ox. On the contrary, he invented a mode of adjustment surpassing the ingenuity of any previous creature on the earth. Instead of altering himself, he directed his efforts to the alteration of external conditions. Instead of trying to fit his organism into an environment that had become incompatible with his needs, he tried to adapt that environment to his organism and its needs.

This new and peculiarly human method of adjustment is still going on, and will probably never cease. It is incessantly becoming more delicate, skilful, and complete; all man's gifts are devoted to it; it is, as a matter

of fact, the sole distinct meaning which the impartial observer can discern in the course of history; it determines all human events that are determined by the will of man rather than the order of nature. According to all biological laws, man should have disappeared from the surface of the earth with the first Ice Age, just as every other living thing before him vanished so soon as the free gifts of nature no longer satisfied its organic needs. But he maintained himself in defiance of nature. Instead of submitting, he advanced resolutely to the combat. His survival is a rebellion against the sentence of death pronounced against him, and still valid. Only a small tract around the equator affords him protection and an asylum from her pursuit—that region which is the last refuge of this kind of men—the greater apes—who once inhabited the whole earth, but now are driven back into the tropical forests. There, too, a few branches of the human race—Australians, Weddas, Central Africans, and perhaps the Indians and Brazilians of Central America—could live in very nearly the primitive existence of our forefathers, but for the pressure exercised upon them by more developed races. As it is, spurred by no incessant pressure of necessity to exercise constant exertion, they have remained comfortable and, from their own point of view, happy in the primitive condition of mankind; they have escaped the progress imposed on less favourably situated races. But outside this zone—all that is left of the earthly paradise—nature denies to man all that he requires, as Rome denied it to the proscribed. Everywhere, and at every hour, he has to wrest from her the necessities of existence with his own hands. From birth to death

he surrounds himself with artificial conditions; if he neglects them for a moment, his life is in imminent danger. His body has to be protected. In very warm climates, clothing, like tattooes and scars, the various ornaments in nose and lips, the hanging of trinkets round the neck, on breast and limbs, may have originated as a form of adornment and distinction; but in colder latitudes the covering of the body was mainly due to the necessity of keeping warm. Man makes his supreme discovery, never surpassed or equalled—the kindling and keeping up of fire. With its aid he secures the degree of warmth helpful and agreeable to him, which the chemical action of his own cells cannot provide; by using fire in the preparation of his foods he simplifies digestion, and is enabled to extract nutriment of various natural kinds that he could not otherwise have enjoyed. Moreover, he acquires an instrument that spares much expenditure of muscular strength, and makes possible exertions that muscle alone could not have accomplished. Many animals whose absolute needs are satisfied by nature need over and above a nest or shelter, and man most of all. He soon ceased to depend on the holes which he found ready made, and began to dig out or build up roofs and walls. In this way he secured, within his own small circle, that protection from the wind, that dryness and warmth, that the open air no longer afforded. He artificially created the climate that he thought suited him. With ever active inventiveness and ardent zeal, he wrested from his environment everything that it denied him, which he could not as yet do without. His whole existence is as paradoxical as that of the diver in the

depths of the sea. Destruction threatens it whenever one of the manifold precautions erected by man for his own preservation is disturbed. Goethe's Homunculus, who can only live in the retort in which he was created, and must instantly perish with the breaking of its glass, appears one of the most far-fetched and unreal creations of the poetic imagination. As a matter of fact, it is reality itself, a perfect symbol of the relations of man to nature. The artificial protections that enclose him are like the glass retort; if he emerge from them and stand, naked as he was born, face to face with nature, he must perish without hope, and descend to the fossils which once lived and flourished so long as nature permitted, and disappeared without a struggle when warmth and nourishment were withdrawn from them.

Deep within man's subconsciousness there lurks a shadow perception of his unnatural relation to his environment, which finds vague expression in myths and imaginative inventions. Is not the "Land of Cockayne" simply a picture of the existence once natural to man, the existence of every other living thing except himself? Does not the caterpillar find in a nut a whole mountain of spices that tastes to it more delicious than millet pap does to man? Does not the spider find the little animals that slide down into its gullet as tasty as any pigeon? A pigeon is always thought of as roast by man, and nature never provided it in that form. But man's imagination works on a basis of ideas developed from his artificial existence. He forgets that in the real land of Cockayne pigeons were not roast, soup was not cooked, pigs not made into

sausages or eaten with knives and forks; there man enjoyed everything in the state in which it was provided by nature, without any alteration or preparation. When he really wishes to rise to great heights of fancy, he pictures a land flowing with milk and honey. He longs for an existence without labour—the exact opposite of the reality that he knows and sees in every human life. Labour, his daily habit, his constant experience, and the command laid upon him from the cradle to the grave, never appears in his dreams; it is banished from the vision inspired by his thirst for bliss. Although in this dream of happiness he sees himself surrounded, not only by the delights that nature can offer, but by all the products of labour—palaces, gorgeous raiment, rich vessels, spicy dishes, and women beautifully attired—it does not occur to him that since these creations must be someone's work, his land of joy cannot be open to all; his happiness is based upon the effort and abstinence of others, and therefore involves exploitation and cruelty. This is natural enough, since his imagination is using the material of experience, while entirely neglecting the law of causality that governs reality.

It is seldom realized that the contradiction between life and dream, the actual and the desired, that runs through the whole of human thought and feeling, represents a half-unconscious recognition, a vague apprehension of the unnatural conditions of human existence. If man dwelt under the conditions common to all other organisms on earth, his desires would be to prolong his habits and experiences there, not to reverse them and fly to something else. One would imagine a lion's

paradise, if he could imagine one, to be more successful hunting; a mole's, better meadow-land for burrowing in; a stork's, to stand in the swamp and catch frogs. One would expect them to keep to the line of their customary activities. Man alone conceives of paradise as a spot in which he may escape from his usual activity. He alone pictures a golden age where Adam Smith's theory of labour as the source of wealth would be false. The Hebrew Bible, one of the earliest products of the creative spirit, expressly designates labour as foreign to man's original nature, a visitation and punishment for his sins. The theory is remarkably profound, but the relation between guilt and labour an inverted one. Labour is not a consequence of sin, but sin a consequence of labour. In a state of nature man could not sin. He found his table laid; there was no one whose share of the goods of earth he need envy or take from him. It was the necessity of building up artificial conditions for the satisfaction of his needs, of exerting himself, of working, that led to that indifference to fellow-men in which all the acts and attempted acts that we call immorality, sin, guilt, crime, arose. Sin appeared in the world on the day when nature ceased to nourish, warm, and fondle man, and compelled him to choose between toil and extinction.

I have described how this compulsion started man's intellectual development and explains the course of his history. At the same time I am not blind to the fact that the formula does not cover the whole field. It affords an adequate explanation of the low level of culture at which the peoples of the equator have remained, probably as a survival, down to the present,

of the original species. The spur of necessity has not touched them; they have not had to fight for their existence. But what about the people, say, of Terra del Fuego? Towards them nature is as fierce an enemy as when the Ice Age set in. She tortures them with hunger, darkness and storms, and rains intolerable blows upon them. They have no comfort. They live a miserable existence in which there is hardly any room for satisfaction. And yet they have done nothing to rise above their wretched lot. The enmity of nature has not roused them to defence. They have invented no protection like the civilization of other races. Necessity alone cannot, therefore, raise man to conquering independence; there must be faculties within him which enable him to combat the hostility of nature effectively; and it is obvious that these faculties are not present in all men to the same degree. But, because many have proved incapable of learning from necessity, it does not follow that it is false to assume, as the origin of all human development, the fact that unfavourable conditions have compelled man to be independent: but that there must have existed at a very early period inequalities of natural endowment within the species, whose inheritance accounts for the origin of different races.

An important question arises at this point, to which no answer can be given. What would have happened had the Ice Age not supervened, had the conditions under which the species originated lasted for ever, or altered so slowly that there would have been ample time for man to adapt himself to his new environment by purely physical changes, and no necessity to prolong his existence by artificial means? Would he have re-

mained a beast? Would he, without external compulsion, by virtue of inward impulses alone, have risen above the level of the apes? The question has more than a merely human import: it includes the essential nature and significance of the universe as a whole.

The question of the laws of human development is intimately connected with the question of the development of the world—its cause, its direction, its goal, its rhythmic movement—and to this vast riddle we can find no solution, for all our guessing. That the indispensable idea of the eternity of the universe is incompatible with the idea of development needs no proof. It is clear that development—a succession of events in time—must have a starting-point, a beginning, a continuation, and a climax. But in eternity no starting-point is possible—one must always go back to eternity again. In eternity any chain of circumstances, however long a time it may have lasted, must, within eternity, have attained its most remote possible goal, and so be closed in. Eternity allows to human thought only the idea of eternal rest or of eternal cyclical movement. The only significance that could then be attached to development within the universe would be that of the eternal repetition of the process of differentiating simple conditions in terms of ever greater complexity and variety, and then simplifying the complexity and variety: the process that Herbert Spencer described as an unchanging and unvarying cycle of integration and dissociation. In a sense development does exist from the point of view of the mortal man enclosed within one of these eternally recurring cycles. He witnesses isolated phases of integration and dissociation, and can observe changes

that he may interpret as progress or retrogression. But he never sees a whole cycle, far less a succession of cycles. He is so far justified, then, in rejecting the annihilating idea of an unchanging, eternal similarity in the universe, and finding, in his weakness, more profit and encouragement in the notion of development. Moreover, it is rational to assume that the course of development followed by our solar system, which has created the planets and their satellites out of primitive vapour, the cool solidity of the life-bearing earth from a fiery rain of cosmic drops, and highly differentiated mammalia and plants from unicellular organisms—that that course did not stop at the monkey-man, the pygmies of the Nyanza or the Weddas. On the contrary, we may assume that the forces that have gradually made vertebrates and animals in human form out of the worms would, under the most favourable conditions of natural existence, have finally developed primitive men to thinkers with mighty craniums and brains weighing from 1,800 to 2,000 grammes—men capable of all the knowledge to which we have attained to-day, although they might not have risen to our technical achievements, which would be unnecessary to them. At the same time, it is highly probable that this advance would have proceeded incomparably more slowly than when existence itself depended on adjustment to hostile natural conditions. This can be seen from the duration of the actual stages in development. The oldest mammalia, monotremes, and marsupials appear in the keuper bed of the trias, in which the existence of men is doubtful. The first certain date for their appearance is the quaternary epoch. The time between the trias and

the transformations effected by the floods covers certainly tens—according to many geologists, hundreds—of millions of years; it was then that the life of man upon earth arose. Man remained in the first stage, if not for millions, at least for hundreds of thousands of years without making any visible progress. It was not till the first Stone Age that he began to emerge from a purely animal state. Then the first faint dawn of civilization begins. Traces of coal and ashes, marks of burning on bones, show that fire was beginning to be known; clumsy attempts at stone-carving mark the awakening of the creative faculty of the intellect. Maybe 100,000 years, or, according to Dr. Mortillet, 238,000 years separate us from the man of Neanderthal; hardly more than 20,000 years from the man of Golutré, Le Moustier, Chelles, or Acheul. The man of Neanderthal was not, in all probability, subject to the necessity of fighting for his existence, but life had begun to be a hard struggle for the man of the earliest Stone Age.

Let us now look back over the course of development, and observe its tempo. From the appearance of the first mammalia to the arrival of man, an incalculable period, hundreds of millions of years. From the arrival of man to the last Ice Age, contemporaneous with the beginning of intellectual effort and its fruit, civilization, several hundred thousands of years. From the last Ice Age that affected man, and the first Stone Age, to the institution of organized political life in Asia and around the Eastern Mediterranean, about fifteen thousand years. From the earliest Assyrian and Egyptian monuments and inscriptions, down to the be-

ginning of really scientific knowledge, about seven thousand years. From the beginning of modern science and the utilization of natural forces on a large scale, which it rendered possible, down to the developed mechanics of to-day, with its use of the microscope, radiograph, and electricity, and its advanced physical and chemical powers, about a hundred years. Thus, to develop from an animal to Lavoisier took about twenty thousand years, from Lavoisier till to-day something over a hundred. While the species probably remained in the condition of the men of the Neanderthal for some hundreds of thousands of years, is there anything rash or abitrary in the assumption that this immense acceleration of the rhythm of development was not merely contemporaneous with the sudden appearance of the last Ice Age, but conditioned by it? that without that alteration of environment man would not to-day have advanced much beyond the Neanderthal stage, and that the savages of the equator might represent the most developed type? The supposition at any rate rests upon the fact that wherever nature has spread her table for man, and freed him from the necessity to provide shelter and clothing, he has remained at the lowest stage of culture and civilization. We may go further. Even if it be admitted that within the limits of the cyclical movement of the universe there exists in man, as in all other forms of life upon the planet, an impulse towards development that might have led him on to supreme knowledge even without the necessity of adaptation, such progress must have been extraordinarily much slower—so slow, indeed, that we may ask ourselves whether under such conditions the species would

have survived its attainment. For it is highly probable that the existence of the earth, or at least of its power to sustain life, is limited in time, and quite possible that it might reach the end of its course before humanity had attained the goal of its development. Thus, while gradual refrigeration had operated to accelerate man's intellectual growth, the disappearance of water and air would have destroyed a race whose instincts might have brought them to great heights in the domain of the creative imagination, but not to rationalizing knowledge. Life on earth would then have come to an end without any scientific view of the world as a whole.

We may leave these possibilities on one side. Experience has established that, with the exception of the human species, no living thing can survive except under favourable natural conditions. If the conditions become unfavourable, they either adapt their physical organization to the change, or, if they cannot, perish irretrievably. Man is the sole living thing upon the earth that refuses to be exterminated by an unfavourable environment, and defends himself actively against nature by the invention of artificial conditions. Instead of adapting his skin, his digestive apparatus, and the means by which he moves from place to place, he confined himself to adaptation by his brain, the most highly differentiated part of his system. Why we do not know, and at the present stage of our knowledge it is bootless to inquire. Once for all we possess a brain relatively heavier and more efficient than that of any other creature; once for all we are the final stage of that process of development from the unicellular organism that had, by the last Ice Age, produced a creature capa-

ble, as it proved, of concentrated and sustained attention. All that was required for success in the struggle for existence arose from this single capacity in man. Through his capacity to attend he learned to observe phenomena with understanding, and gradually to differentiate the permanent, and therefore essential, features from those that were transitory, and therefore inessential. Through it, too, he acquired the power of abstract thought, of generalization and logical deduction, comprehended the causal connection of events, and was able at the last to create conditions in which phenomena favourable to himself could appear. This was the test of the exactitude of his observation and the accuracy of his conclusions; it established his power; it enabled him to use for the maintenance, protection, and enrichment of his own existence some at least of those natural forces that would have destroyed him had he offered no resistance.

A phenomenon unique since the formation of the globe was thus presented when one living species, mankind, finding the conditions of existence offered by nature to be impossible, created artificial ones by means of a brain that warded off dangers, and facilitated, or even created, the satisfaction of its needs. Equally new was another phenomenon which developed from the first, and in close connection with it—parasitism within the species. Sycophancy is of frequent occurrence in nature among plants as well as animals. One animal species will subdue another, and instead of destroying it for prey, or using it, as the ants do the woodlice, for some sort of domestic service, make it work regularly for them as is again the practice of the ants.

Cannibalism is also practised, though it is exceptional, and comparatively rare. Certain insects, possibly certain fishes, certainly murines and wolves, do eat their weaker or sickly fellows, independently of other food. On the other hand, man is the only creature who lives upon his fellows, and seeks the satisfaction of his needs, not from nature, but from other men; who directs his efforts rather to subjugating and systematically exploiting his fellow-men than to discovering natural resources for himself.

This parasitic impulse is not a primitive instinct in man. It does not appear among the few tribes who are still living in a state of nature, with whom, according to the testimony of travellers, slavery and every form of personal service or ownership, theft, robbery, and murder with intent to rob, are alike unknown. It does not occur among apes. It is, in fact, incomprehensible so long as the conditions of existence of the species are determined by nature. When nature is cook and waiter, the table she spreads for one is spread for all, and no one can feel any desire to wrest from his neighbour by force or fraud what each can take from the common store without any struggle or hindrance. Beasts of prey go on the chase, singly or in packs, without expecting or desiring that anyone should do their hunting for them. We may assume that the activities necessary for the satisfaction of wants are, in the case of all creatures living under natural conditions, accompanied by pleasurable sensations that would be unwillingly renounced. Primitive man himself would have preferred to weave his own roof of leaves, to bring his own foliage and moss to make his couch soft, gather

birds'-nests, and dig roots for himself, to having this done for him by others. But, when external conditions frowned upon him, he began to feel that, since nature no longer provided for him, it was pleasant that his fellow-men should do so. Parasitism arose by the operation of the law of least effort. It is easier and pleasanter to use the finished product of the work of others than to wrest raw material from nature; and it is obvious that when some men are weak, cowardly, and simple, less trouble, attention, endurance, inventiveness and ingenuity are needed to seize the necessities of life from them than to provide them for oneself.

Parasitism thus arises out of the original inequality of men. All experience is against the belief, expressed by Plato in the "Republic," in the original equality of man. No example of equality between the individuals of a series or species is to be found among the heavenly bodies, or the material substances of which our earth is composed, among the crystals, or any order of living things. Aristotle rightly departs from this view of his master. He teaches that among men some are born to command, and others to obey. But in this statement cause and effect are confused. The faculties of command and obedience are consequences of original inequality. This inequality is the fundamental fact. From it the mutual relations of men have been developed; in it almost all social institutions take their rise. Few of them serve for the exploitation of natural resource, the great majority for the exploitation of the many by the few. By this fact the State, laws, even morals, and the course of human history have been determined. Any investigation which goes deeper than

unimportant and misleading superficialities must recognize, as the determining factor in almost all historical events, this inequality among men, and the attempt on the part of a person or a nation to gain an advantage from the consciousness of it.

The instinct of self-preservation exists in man, as in all other living creatures, and probably to an even stronger degree. This appears in his defiance of those unfavourable natural conditions to which all other species submitted, often without any attempt at resistance beyond generally immaterial corporeal adjustments. In consequence of man's unnatural way of life, the instinct itself has undergone such profound transformations that it often appears so disguised that it is difficult to recognize it. The fierceness of the struggle for existence aroused a tendency to parasitism, as involving less effort than direct conflict with murderous nature. And parasitism, in itself a special development of the instinct of self-preservation, adapted to meet the hostility of nature, set up in its turn a number of secondary instincts that would have been useless to man had he lived under such favourable conditions as would have enabled him to satisfy his needs without trouble or effort, but were useful and even necessary when he must make his fellows servants of his will, and has to live by plunder and by sycophancy.

Parasitism itself, in its original and crudest form, is mere brutal violence—murder and robbery of the individual, the waging of war on a tribe or people. But as the forms of common life become more various and complicated, and the structure of society is established and maintained by recognized rules and binding laws,

you no longer have the strong and courageous individual looking upon his neighbour simply as his prey, and using him and his goods for the satisfaction of his own needs. Then there arises "the will to power," trumpeted abroad nowadays as a new philosophical discovery, but really only the old parasitism, the old perversion of the instinct of self-preservation, adapted to the circumstances of civilized life under legal forms.

The will to power is a secondary, not an original instinct. It does not appear in a state of nature. There the individual does not strive to rise above his fellows, or to mix with them from motives of pride, vanity, or ambition. Individuals of the same genus do not fight except about women—either because there are not women enough, or because in one place many men are found wooing the same woman. Then the strongest and bravest man drives his rivals from the field, and keeps the woman for himself; she apparently, as a rule, shows no particular preference, and yields without resistance to the conqueror. Out of the breeding season no animal strives for power. Man alone displays that striving, and parasitism is its object. His aim in seeking for power is the exploitation of the strength and capacity of other men. He need not necessarily be conscious of this. During the struggle for power he may believe that he seeks it for its own sake. The intoxication of power, the sense of pleasure aroused by its possession, do not necessarily include any recognition that it only serves, in the last resort, to save him from the struggle with inhospitable nature, and maintain his existence by means of the efforts of others. Such unconsciousness of the real object of effort is a psycholog-

ical fact frequently observed. The vanity which strives to please, to make an impression, or to rouse envy; the ambition which sets before itself the higher aim of rising above the others, compelling them to recognize a superiority, and determining the thoughts, behaviour, and actions of thousands of millions of persons by its single will, while it is yet generally satisfied with a fame which is but the vain reflection or phantom of real power over men—both of these are but distorted forms of the will to power, which in its turn is, as I have shown, only the will to parasitism.

The unfavourable conditions under which man is condemned to carry on his existence upon earth have thus transformed the instinct of self-preservation, common to all living things, into the tendency to parasitism, peculiar to himself alone. As long as he was the free guest of nature he would never have troubled to try to please Eve or anyone else; he would have felt no ambition, no striving after power. But when his free food ceased, observation showed him that his best and easiest plan was to take possession of the implements, traps, hunting and huts of his weaker fellows, and thus win by one brief effort all that the others had obtained by long and toilsome diligence. His original battle instinct, naturally aroused only by desire for a particular woman already sought by many wooers, was diverted from its first object, and developed in another direction. It was soon aroused by any and every desirable or useful object, and so whatever could satisfy any human need aroused mutual struggles, of which woman was originally the sole cause and prize. Although the battle instinct is no longer immediately connected with and

dependent on the sex instinct, it is to this day decidedly coloured by it. Psychological investigation, if it go deep enough, will discover the battle instinct to be rooted in sex. The erotic strain visible in certain aspects of the passionate lust of battle and the delight in victory is undeniable. Thus ambition, vanity, the will to power, all the impulses and efforts that are either admitted or felt to be parasitic, instead of being new instincts, are, as a matter of fact, merely the primitive desire of woman directed to a new end. It was from this that the battle instinct arose in man. Its object, instead of the winning of a woman, is now the subjugation of and domination over others, and the exploitation of the fruits of their labour, but the unconscious connection with the sex instinct remains. In the intoxication of victory it is always present, however obscure. Triumph as it presents itself to the imagination of the ambitious conqueror will hardly omit some faintly indicated female forms.

Ancient poets like Ovid, and dogmatic sociologists of the subjective type of J. J. Rousseau, who describe a golden age in the past, endow primitive man with all the virtues. But their exaggerated descriptions have little relation to actuality. It is more rational to assume that primitive man was neither good nor evil. There was no room for such moral conceptions as virtue and vice, or any moral judgments of human action, so long as all man's needs were supplied by nature. He was selfish with the innocent selfishness of the animal. His only care was to protect himself against the larger beasts of prey. His only bond of union with his fellows was the habit of playing and possibly of hunting together. His

relations to his fellows did not alter until nature declared war upon him. Then, to accommodate himself to the new and toilsome way of life, he developed parasitism. "Man became a wolf to man"; the weak learned to fear his brother, the strong to prey upon him. He paled and cringed before one who used violence against him, and felt drawn to one who left him alone. Good he called the one who did nothing against him, evil him who had designs on his life, goods, or strength.

Thus the conceptions good and evil originally denoted the non-parasitic and parasitic respectively. Morality arose from the unnatural conditions of human existence, an inevitable result of the prison in which Homunculus is enclosed. Morality would not have been needed or acquired in the condition of delightful freedom enjoyed by the guests of the mythical paradise. Before men could conceive of actions as being good or evil, they must have suffered from the selfishness of their fellows, and felt the need of friendly succour. Only the weak have suffered and called for help; to them the origin of morality is due. The parasite could not possibly feel that there was anything reprehensible in his forcible exploitation of his fellows. That was left for the exploited. A moral judgment of good and evil was, in its origin, a confession of weakness, a symbolic rejection by the spirit of the violence which the body was not strong enough to resist.

Morality has developed, widened, and deepened. It has risen to a degree of subtlety and grandeur that primitive man could not have understood. Oblivious of its origin, it no longer remembers that it once expressed the terror of the hunted before the pursuer, the

impotent hatred of the vanquished for the conqueror. Out of his own experience man learned to understand suffering, and to hate and condemn those who caused pain to others. In time this generalization mastered the thought of the strong, for whom it had no application. Thus the framework was created into which there fitted all the further ramifications of morality—love of one's neighbour, self-control, and regard for human personality.

Such is the progress of human development as it presents itself to the unprejudiced and undogmatic observer. Towards the end of the tertiary or the beginning of the quaternary period the earth was inhabited by an animal species, distinguished from all hitherto existing living forms by the relatively great weight of its brain. At a given movement the climate of the earth altered. Nature deprived the favoured species of the very conditions of its existence. The species, which was destined in the course of its development to become mankind as it is, joined battle with the hostile world, and emerged victorious, thanks to its capacity for artificial attention, observation, and correct inference. But the individuals of which it was composed were unequal; there were among them strong and weak, clever and stupid. The better equipped soon saw that it was easier for them to exploit the less well endowed than to struggle with nature in their own persons. Parasitism arose, and regulated relations within the species. The exploited then created the notion of morality, as a protection against the parasitism already in operation which threatened them all. Between parasitism and morality there is an eternal warfare. Small successes

are won, now by one side, now by the other. It is by the action of these two mighty forces, the tendency to exploitation on the one hand, and on the other the angel of morality with the flaming sword, putting his violent deeds to shame, that the external destinies of mankind are controlled.

CHAPTER V

SOCIETY AND THE INDIVIDUAL

It would be of the deepest interest to know how the individuals composing the human species, who must certainly have originally been completely free and independent, came to sacrifice their freedom, and to form tribes, peoples, and states on a basis of mutual dependence. History has no information to give us. It did not arise until men had long ago been massed into fixed political bodies, and the individual of the original type, one subject to no external discipline, an anarchist in the root-sense of the word, had disappeared. The fact that there are no primitive records of a time before this ordering into regular bodies took place, not even any mythical recollection of it, has persuaded many that mankind, as a matter of fact, never did consist of disconnected units; that it was at its first appearance upon earth grouped in hordes; that the natural condition of its existence was a congregation of the larger units. It was hoped that this fundamental sociological question would be elucidated by observation of savages; as a matter of fact, the method is inadequate. Nowadays, and for a long time past, real savages have ceased to exist. No race on earth lives completely apart, without any relation to the rest of the world. Such an isolation does not exist even on the little islands of Micronesia;

even there some mutual intercourse exists. Men might have lived, remote from the world, on an isolated island in mid-ocean, far removed from any other island or from the mainland, but when such islands as Tristan da Cunha, Ascension, or St. Helena were discovered by Europeans in the course of the last centuries they were uninhabited. And even savage tribes do come in contact with one another, if only on their outposts, the boundaries of their territories. Although the encounter be hostile, mutual knowledge accrues, and the horizon of each is widened. In the course of long periods of time a kind of acquaintance with the conditions of remote lands spreads from race to race. Dim as this knowledge may be, subject to strange and mistaken interpretations, it does gradually carry some faint reflection of the light that shines in civilized lands to savages that appear exceedingly lonely and remote from all intercourse with the world. Ideas, institutions, discoveries, and customs, are conveyed with a slow, yet irresistible, progress from the spot where they arise all over the world. Every nation or race appropriates what the stage of mental development it has reached enables it to retain. Thus the influence extended to all is felt, whether deeply or superficially, by all. For thousands of years no section of humanity can have been entirely without cognizance of the formation of States and people going on in other lands, and the imitative impulse common to the race has certainly assisted the spread of organized forms of common life. That savages show a social disposition, and tend to live in some sort of society or state, is a matter of observation, and proves, not that such social crystallizations are a primary

characteristic of the species, but that no section of mankind can wholly escape the effect of the example of others.

It is open to question whether historians and sociologists were on the right track in endeavouring to understand the remote past of humanity, and the origins of its civilization from an examination of the views, habits, and customs of savages. In the first place, the name " natural " peoples, used to justify this method, is really not justifiable at all. All the peoples of the earth have long ago ceased to live under their primitive constitution, and the condition of all of them, far from affording any true picture of the primitive status of the race, represents a stage in civilization that, however low it be esteemed, is the outcome of many thousand years of creative and imitative effort. Secondly, conclusions drawn from the conditions of savages cannot be valid for humanity as a whole, since savages are the least gifted and most backward portion of the species, and their intellectual life throughout centuries has been quite different, and on a much lower plan, from that of the more highly endowed races. Of course, there was a time when there was little difference between the remote ancestors of the Germans, Englishmen, and Frenchmen of to-day and those of the Weddas, Nyam-Nyam, or New Guinea races. But they must have far surpassed their coloured fellows in brain, invention, and the thirst for knowledge. They replied to the compulsion of nature by building up the whole fabric of civilization as it is to-day. The coloured races, on the other hand, remained unintelligent and brutish, even in those localities where they were subjected to the same climatic

disadvantages as the whites—*e.g.*, North America, Northern Asia, and Patagonia—and were equally compelled to fight against the hostility of nature. Even in primitive times the world must have presented quite a different picture to the white man and to the coloured. The thought of a black Australian, a negro from the Congo, or an Indian from Gran Chaco cannot run on parallel lines with that of a primitive German or Chaldee. To try to understand the intellectual progress of civilized man from the study of the savage is like trying to grasp the feelings, thoughts, knowledge, and action of a people from a study of its children and idiots. It should be expressly stated that there are to-day neither white nor yellow savages. Between the white and yellow races, indeed, there is little difference. They probably either sprang from one primitive stock or have been very considerably intermingled. This seems to be proved by the fact, among others, that about three per cent. of white children bear near the coccyx the blue mark that distinguishes the Mongolian race, while a Mongoloid physiognomy, that no doubt represents a throw-back, is very common among degenerate whites. When, therefore, we speak of savages or of natural peoples, we can at the present day include only blacks and reds. From them no valid conclusion can be drawn as to the intellectual capacity of mankind as a whole. Maoris may be prominent members of the New Zealand Parliament; Redskins may be successful in law, journalism, and business in North America. Negroes in the United States and Haiti may have acquired a scientific education, and occupied themselves with music and poetry. This only proves that the

imitative faculty is a universal human attribute, in which black and red men are not deficient. All the instances adduced to prove that there is no difference in the intellectual capacity of the chief races are instances of more or less happy imitation. Creative activities, discoveries, or inventions have not as yet been credited to members of the black or red race. But the civilization which the white man has built up is no mere imitative game, however clever; it is a connected body of creative activities.

No. Observation of so-called savages can teach us nothing of the being, ways, and primitive instincts of those men from which the highest type was to develop.

A different method, which promises more certain knowledge, is the careful investigation of those innate, involuntary movements of the human soul, which persist in spite of education or culture. This method rests on the assumption that in every species, the human included, there are certain fundamental instincts that are as indestructible as its anatomical form, and as little subject to transmogrification. I know that education can profoundly affect even what seems a fundamental instinct, as in the case of the cats of Ruhla, which no longer behave towards birds as beasts of prey. In such a case, however, it can be proved that the fundamental character, though overlaid, is not destroyed, and can be roused again by any influence strong enough to sweep away the overlay. Let us keep to our instance. If one were to shut up a cat of Ruhla and a bird in a cage together, having provided the bird with plenty of seed but left the cat hungry, the moment would certainly

come when the cat would forget all its training and devour the bird, without delaying an instant to consider the pious duty of feeding on seed. Therefore, if our observation were protracted enough, attentive enough, and properly directed, we should see the wild hunter of birds through the changes that education had brought upon the cat. And such is doubtless the case with all fundamental instincts, including those possessed by man. In his natural state he gave way to them without any attempt at resistance. But when his existence became artificial, these instincts ceased to have full sway over him. The instinct of preservation, the mightiest of them all, overcame the others, or turned them aside from their natural aim. Many human instincts served as weapons in the fight with the surrounding world, and determined the form of the civilization that man created to assist him in the fight; others had to go under, and did not survive. They did not, therefore, disappear. They do persist, but deep down, chained in a dark prison, seldom lit by the uncertain light of consciousness, in which they mostly remain strongly guarded a whole life long. Yet sometimes they break loose, and the man who has thus failed to guard his prisoners passes for an eccentric, a criminal, a revolutionary—in a word, an abnormal, anti-social creature. It is these suppressed instincts that we have to discover. The task is a thorny one. One must abandon the ordinary point of view—morality—since morality is the product of civilization, and these primitive tendencies are prior to civilization, and therefore to morality. Moreover, one must free oneself from all the prejudices bred in us by thousands of years of social tradition.

The task is to investigate nature, to establish facts, not to pass judgment; and since the only method that holds out any prospect of success is that of introspection—searching examination of the inner consciousness—the observer must have no presuppositions, he must not pose for a moment: he must regard himself with complete objectivity as a physical apparatus, and dismiss wholly from his mind all he may have heard or read as to the nature of man and the fundamental traits of his character, and all the opinions that he himself, as a moral and civilized being, may hold as to the praise or blame-worthiness of individual tendencies. Only so can he hope that, hidden beneath the superstructure raised by civilization, he may discover the strange ruin that he perhaps never expected to find there. The ruin may rouse disgust and uneasiness within him, he would may be gladly hide it from his own knowledge. He has, however, to recognize in it the primitive history of his existence. For a knowledge of the past of the species it is as important carefully to trace out the instincts that, in the healthy man, are ambiguous, tortuous, and overlaid as it is to investigate those bodily dispositions and organs that are now useless and rudimentary. These instincts are survivals, like the loop of the branchia in the neck of the embryo or the vermiform appendix. They witness to intellectual phylogeny. The question is how to interpret them correctly. For that one may have recourse, as in the case of anatomical atavism, to pathology and the comparison with related animal species. The morbid development of certain instincts in abnormal men may enable us to understand the bare indications of such tendencies in normal men. Certain

conclusions as to the primitive nature of man may be drawn from careful observation of the ways and habits of the apes, who are nearer to us in the scale, so long as it is supplemented by a constant comparison with human traits.

Such a method of observing mankind fills one with grave distrust of the old statement of Aristotle, that man is πολιτικον ζῳον. "Man is a political animal," said the Stagyrite, "born for association with other men; he cannot attain either virtue or happiness as an isolated individual." Certainly not virtue, for Aristotle's virtue is a social good, and can, of course, have no value outside of society. But what about happiness? Of that Aristotle knows nothing, for he has in his eye only the man he knows, the child of civilization, who has grown up in the midst of society and the State, whose habits all depend on his relation to his fellow-men, without whom he could not imagine existence. But what Aristotle has not proved is that man is by nature what he appears when living with others. On the contrary, everything points to the fact that man's natural state, before he was compelled to support life by artificial means, was not gregarious; he did not live in herds, but as a solitary being. The solitary naturally strove to form one of a pair, since only then did he attain the individuality which satisfied all his organic possibilities, and rendered him, in the biological sense, complete. The apes, our nearest relations, do not naturally go in herds. The orang-outang, the gorilla, and the chimpanzee live in families, without any attempt at intercourse with neighbours, in this respect resembling the large beasts of prey, who hunt alone, and only form

pairs in the breeding season. Only the lower apes go in troops. F. H. Giddings brings forward no proof in support of his purely dogmatic assertion that man's animal ancestors were "social." In Giddings' sense present-day man is not social, as has been shown; Ward is undoubtedly on firmer ground in his denial of the existence of any "social feelings" at all.

The old way of talking of the "political animal" and the "gregarious animal" is, moreover, discredited by the example of the ape. Attentive observation of basic human instincts leads to the same result—namely, that man is not a social, but a solitary animal. How closely in an organized society a man seems bound to his fellows! How inextricably are their interests intertwined! What a tremendously powerful impulse seems to draw each man to the companionship of his kind! It fills the reception-rooms in palaces—this instinct—the public-houses and the tea-rooms, the bars frequented by the proletariate, and the buffets of the fashionable hotels, the theatres and the music-halls. It creates clubs and unions. It is one of the forces that draw people from the villages into the big towns. It is the basis of Society, with a big "S." It underlies the countless forms of daily intercourse of people of the same class and similar tastes. And yet it is all external, superficial; underneath it all, beneath the exclusive visiting-list of the smart lady, behind all those receptions, dinners, balls, At Homes, æsthetic tea-parties, private banquet-halls and reserved tables at restaurants, there lurks, in the depths of the consciousness, a secret emotion that contradicts it all. Everyone who has passed the lowest stage of intellectual development shrouds

the more intimate aspects of his life from the view of others. Whether the conditions of his existence be simple or highly complicated, he conceals them, to the best of his ability, from the curiosity of his neighbours. Even at school, in the canteen, on board ship, or in the cloister, where a man cannot shut himself away, where every movement is observed, where the individual is most completely absorbed into the community, even there every man guards a secret that he shares with none. One often hears it said: "The life of this or that man lies like an open book before the eyes of all." This statement must never be taken literally. There are always stray pages that cannot be turned. What a man hides from the world is not necessarily anything bad, anything of which he need be ashamed. It is only that he will never reveal himself fully, never expose himself to view on every side, because of something within him that shrinks from such complete publicity. In the depths of every soul there is a shyness, a shamefacedness, that represents a still, but enduring, protest against social life—life in the herd. Every soul is a world of its own, and maintains its isolation with desperate earnestness. The gates open but a narrow chink. The outsider never gets farther than the anteroom. The inner chambers remain for ever closed to him. Countless persons have recorded their own lives. Is anyone so uncritical as to believe that they have been quite honest? Even in the autobiographies that are by way of being full confessions, such as the twelve books of the "Confessions" of St. Augustine, or the "Confessions" of J. J. Rousseau, the author is almost always unconsciously, and frequently even con-

sciously, posing. Even here an impenetrable dusk shrouds the real bases of personality.

Everyone's first impulse on meeting an unknown fellow-creature is shyness, caution, mistrust, even enmity. Habit dulls these feelings. They retreat across the threshold of consciousness, but never wholly disappear. This is not contradicted by the fact that men seek one another out, find pleasure in one another's society, and try to attract others to themselves. Here all sorts of secondary interests come into play—the vanity that loves to shine before others, ambition that would make use of them, self-aggrandisement that aims at exploiting them. The thousand complexities of an artificial, civilized existence bind every individual member of a community with threads that are strong for all their fineness, and leave him no longer free to follow his impulses. The mutual cordialities of social life are cut flowers; their stalks are stuck in the earth, but they have no roots there. Relations between men are not the outcome of a primitive impulse, but of a late developed utilitarianism. Were man really a gregarious animal, he would feel himself irresistibly drawn to his fellows; his relations to them would know no reserve; he would never withdraw into himself, and try to keep his inner self curtained away, nor ever feel an irresistible need for solitude and a retreat within himself.

Against the theory that man, like the ape, is not naturally a social, but a solitary, being it may be urged that his undeniable tendency to feel distrust and shyness of his fellows is a late, and not a primitive instinct, only developed when he was compelled to live under

artificial conditions, and consequently to become parasitic.

Since from that time on man inevitably saw in everyone, until the contrary was proved, a parasite and exploiter—that is, an enemy—his instinct of self-preservation put him on his guard against his fellows, and taught him to fear and avoid them. As civilization developed parasitism concealed itself under more and more subtle and fair-seeming forms. The majority, becoming used to the exploitation to which their inferiority in brain and strength condemned them, no longer felt their existence threatened by it. The instinct of self-preservation, thus lulled to sleep, ceased to put men on their guard against their fellows, and to warn them to keep them at as great distance as possible. Thus the tendency to isolation and solitude stepped farther and farther back over the threshold of consciousness, and is now in most men but a wretched survival, only discoverable after careful search.

This objection cannot be proved to be unfounded. It is, however, contradicted by the unalterable inner solitude that is most complete precisely in the strongest types of the species, and therefore cannot possibly have been acquired simply as a protection or defence against attack.

The avoidance of mankind and flight from the world of many hermits, some saints, and certain sufferers from melancholia may be regarded as a form of pathological atavism. It is observed that primitive instincts, which in a state of health are suppressed by civilization, break out in sickness. In the same way murder and other cannibal predilections appear in criminal degenerates.

Similarly, the anti-social feelings that appear in abnormal persons represent, in all probability, a reversion to primitive states, not a new phenomenon.

Unbiassed observation leads, then, to the uncomfortable conclusion that man walks in fearsome loneliness throughout his life. Apart from love, which will be treated later, he never comes into intimate connection with people in general, except when he abandons himself to some big intellectual current, some view, some æsthetic movement, some political or religious party. There he mixes with those who share his views, without ever getting to know them personally or realizing their individual traits. On the other hand, whenever he does get to know them, natural incompatibility at once proves stronger than the bond of common opinions, as is proved by the friction and the bitter animosities so frequent among leaders of any party, sect, or school, whether philosophic, literary, or artistic.

Rauber[1] thought that he could prove Aristotle's assertion of man's gregarious nature to be correct, by collecting and critically examining all possible information about the instances that appear from time to time of men living in a state of barbarism. His conclusion was that, since persons who have grown up far from men, in the woods and amidst animals, cannot speak, and have hardly anything human about them, therefore the individual can never be regarded as a man—society alone makes him a man. So long as Rauber confines the title of man to an individual who speaks correctly,

[1] Dr. R. Rauber, "Homo Sapiens Ferus; or, The Condition of the Savage, and its Scientific, Political, and Educational Significance," Leipzig, 1885.

has passed his standards, is respectably dressed, and knows how to behave himself properly, he is perfectly right in refusing it to the wild creatures who have from time to time been found in the woods of Russia and South Germany, in the Pyrenees, and in Belgium. But there is no scientific justification for making the idea of man synonymous with that of a model citizen. It should no more surprise Rauber to find men living in barbarism unable to speak than that a child born and brought up in Germany, and surrounded by Germans, does not speak French or English. Language is not an inborn, but an acquired faculty. Wild men had no opportunity to learn it, and no need, since it is merely the means of carrying on those relationships with other men that they did not possess. Rauber maintains that his barbarians were not only unable to speak, but even to think. His own facts contradict him. Barbarians distinguish very clearly between friend and foe; they know how to express comfort or ill-humour; they observe their environment, and to some extent adapt themselves to it. The mere fact that they succeeded, under the most unfavourable circumstances, in supporting life in the wilderness proves them to be possessed of many faculties wanting in many a civilized man who speaks beautifully, and in other respects comes up to Rauber's ideal. Moreover, as von Schreber correctly observed, most, if not all, wild men did not lose their reason in the wilderness, but fled thither because feeble-minded or insane from their birth. As a matter of fact, Rauber's dictum, "homo sapiens ferus," has no significance in the question of the mode of life of primitive man. No one denies that, in the present state of

humanity, an individual who has been solitary since his childhood, and shut off from the society of his kind, must, from an intellectual point of view, be far behind those who have grown up and lived in a community. To do so would be to deny the value of upbringing, instruction, and example. Obviously, a single being, even were he a supreme genius, could not in the course of a short life make for himself the inventions and discoveries that represent the thousand years of work of the whole human race, and are transmitted to the educated individual in a compressed and abbreviated form, at school, by the reading of books, and instruction in the use of his faculties. But this fragmentary truth does not entitle us to the conclusion that men have been social beings since they began to be. Beneath the great mass of outworn ideas are certain feelings to which man has held fast, and they are solitary feelings.

For thousands of years men have gone on repeating with lowered voice, and eyes piously uplifted and brimming with tears, sentimentalities that they take to be irrefutable, unassailable truths. They rave of friendship and love of one's neighbour—in these days of sympathy and altruism—as glorious feelings in which only quite exceptional monsters are deficient. The spectacle of social life, however, must give any unprejudiced observer pause, and cause a doubt as to the reality of these universally esteemed qualities of human nature, for, as judged by their actions, men appear to be animated, not by brotherly love and friendship, but by selfishness and a hard indifference to others. Therefore those phrases and catch-words, that form part of the fabric of conventional morality, must be tested without

any reference to the fact that they pass current everywhere, that on one examines and everyone praises them.

Friendship! It is a word that makes the heart beat high. Alas! it is only a word. Does it exist? What is it? Cicero's often-quoted work on "Friendship" starts from the Aristotelian dictum, reiterated with a certain hesitation, that man is a political animal, and therefore disposed by nature to mutual attachment.[1] He gives the famous definition of friendship: "It is indeed nothing less than the most complete harmony of all things, Divine and human, with good-will and affection."[2] This "good-will and affection" is smuggled in with truly sophistic skill, for it is that precisely which has to be proved. It is clear that complete harmony in all things is pleasant. Everyone is always convinced that he is right; when he finds his own views in another, he has the same good opinion of him that he has of himself. But what about good-will and affection? In friendship defined as harmony the other really has no place; he is merely the mirror for the pleased contemplation of personal vanity, the echo which gives back the agreeable sound of a man's own voice. It is self that is sought, self that is loved, self, one's own personality, that is never limited or restrained, as it must be by real "caritas." Daily experience proves

[1] M. Tullius Cicero, "De Amicitia," v.: "Sic enim mihi perspicere videor, ita natos esse nos ut inter omnes esset societas quædam." It seems to him "that we are so constituted that a certain social bond exists between us all."

[2] *Ibid.*, book vi.: "Est autem amicitia mihi aliud nisi omnium divinorum humanarumque rerum cum benevolentia et caritate summa consensio."

how insecure a basis harmony affords for friendship. Let but some new question arise, upon which two hitherto like-minded friends take different views, and friendships that may have lasted a lifetime are rent asunder in a moment, or even, as happened a thousand times in France during the Dreyfus case, converted into deadly enmities. One seeks in vain for the "benevolentia et caritas," supposed to have been an ingredient in the friendship, which might have prevented or outlived the breach had it really existed, and exercised a mutual attraction. If friendship means only a common point of view, it is wholly intellectual, and not that instinctive expression that alone could prove man's primitive social nature. Cicero himself, moreover, sadly admits that "throughout the centuries three or four pairs of friends can be named" answering to his definition, and that as a rule men only form friendships for the sake of protection and support—"præsidii adjumentique causa"—not from "benevolentia et caritas," and "love their friends as they would a flock out of which they hope to make a profit." [1] A feeling as rare as Cicero admits this to be cannot be a natural instinct.

From antiquity comes the naïve exclamation, "O friends, there are no friends!" and the saying attributed to Bias, and quoted by Diogenes Laertius, "φιλεῖν ὡς μισήσονεταϛ"—"One should love in the expectation of

[1] Cicero, "De Amicitia," book xxi.: "Sed plerique . . . amicos tanquam pecudes eos potissimum diligunt, ex quibus sperant se maximum fructum esse capturos."

L. Dugas has exhaustively treated the attitude of the ancients towards friendships in his excellent book, "L'Amitié antique d'après les mœurs populaires et les théories des philosophes," Paris, 1894.

hating." Can there be a more horrible denial of true attachment, a more fearsome warning against any simple, unreflective devotion than this suggestion that, in the very instant of overflowing tenderness, one should see the ugly features of the enemy? There was little of self-deception in the cold, keen glance with which La Rochefoucauld acquired his bitter knowledge of mankind. Many of his sayings show how small was his belief in the genuine genuineness of friendship: "We all have the strength to bear the misfortunes of others"; "We often find something far from displeasing to us in the misfortunes of our best friends"; "Our first sensation of pleasure in the good fortune of our friends does not arise from our natural goodness or from our friendship: it is, as a rule, inspired by the selfishness that flatters us with the hope of being lucky in our turn, or of gaining some advantage for ourselves from their good fortune."

What is called friendship is, as a matter of fact, a complex of various emotional and intellectual factors. The superficial relations subsisting between persons belonging to the same profession or rank in society may be dismissed as not worth classification. There is nothing spiritual in such ties, indiscriminately formed by interest, habit, vanity, custom, or at best the satisfaction caused by intellectual affinity. The friendships of childhood and youth are much more deeply rooted. The comradeship formed in these years is usually based upon an inclination in which the element of passion can always be detected, sometimes in a subdued, but often in quite a distinct form. Before puberty the full capacity for love exists, though the consciousness of sex has not

awakened to direct it. A child, a young creature, lavishes on its companions the ardent tenderness that informs its love later on: the feeling is the same, though as yet unconscious, undifferentiated. It is love that expresses itself in such childish friendships, love as yet unconscious of its own meaning and intention, feeling, as in a dream, after some longed-for object, and unconsciously catching hold of something else.[1] Later, when the individual, fully developed, realizes what he seeks, his youthful friendships change their tone and lose their ardour. Yet throughout life there rests upon them a mysterious glamour—the glamour with which everyone's imagination illumines his own youth.[2] So long as they retain the freshness of the present they are love, unconscious of its aim; in the past they become part of each man's youth, and share in the soft tenderness of his thoughts of it.

Even the mature adult is capable of a friendship that penetrates the inmost fibres of his emotional life: the friendship of fellow-soldiers, of Achilles and Patroclus. Men who have fought shoulder to shoulder, who have

[1] Schurtz has recognized, in his book on "Hordes, Classes, and Guilds," the significance of a common life in the years of adolescence in the development of the community, but neglects the psycho-physical side of the attractions subsisting between boys and youths which are often mysterious to themselves.

[2] Compare Hermann Lingg's "Friends" (Schluszsteine, Berlin, 1878, p. 4):

"In the happy days of youth,
Under joy's control,
Thou canst choose thy friends in truth,
Knit them to thy soul.
Only in those early days
Wilt thou make the friend that stays. . . ."

shared danger and hardship, the terrors of death and the intoxication of victory, are indissolubly knit together, so long as they live. It is as though such moments of extreme tension broke down the barriers that separate each individual from his fellows and the world around him, and made possible a fusion and mingling of souls. Since our conscious thought proceeds by analogy, and tends to transfer the feelings accompanying certain actions to others whose resemblance to them is merely symbolical, it often happens that the friendship peculiar to fellow-soldiers is found among those who are fighting battles where no lives are lost and no blood shed—symbolic battles in defence of some conviction.

Friendship in these two instances—the unconscious love of youth and the recollection of comradeship in battle—is a genuine feeling resting on a biological foundation. In all others it is a convention, and only skin-deep. This is even more true of philanthropy, generalized friendship for mankind as a whole. It has really nothing to do with feeling. It is an idea, a system, a method—what you will—but not a living sentiment. Philanthropy is only touched to genuine emotion when the abstract notion of mankind appears in some concrete shape, as someone who is personally attractive, as a particular widow, orphan, or distressed man, whose sufferings have a physiognomy of their own; it is an instinct that is only real in reference to definite individuals: when generalized, all form and purpose disappears. Whatever forms of philanthropic activity one likes to name—donations, endowments, societies, and movements of every sort, from Carnegie's millions for free libraries to the Red Cross Society and

the Salvation Army—one will find vanity, self-righteousness, fancies, fixed ideas, delusions, religious, political, social, or merely political convictions at the bottom of them all, and never that instinctive sympathy which must, by its very nature, be directed to a clearly-defined individual, and cannot be aroused for such vague, undefined generalities as make no appeal to the feelings. Only in abnormal persons, whose intellectual processes are permanently tinged with feeling, does the love of humanity exist in a real and strongly emotional form, and in them it serves to give an intelligible direction to their overwrought sensibility, hovering between tears and rapture; to the longing which has no definite aim, and to the hysterical excitement whose pathological ground they do not understand. Sentimental philanthropy is closely akin to religious mania, and both originate in a morbid mental condition.

Consciousness tries to provide a content such as reason can sanction for an emotionalism that operates in the vague. The form of this content varies, according to the education, upbringing, and intellectual environment of the individual, between mystical communion with God and self-abnegating worship of humanity. This doubtless is the explanation of the love of mankind that amounted to a religion with St. Simon and his disciples, and with Auguste Comte and the Positivists. The altruism of Spencer and the Socialist doctrine of human solidarity are the logical outcome of certain sociological views: the ethical completion of a certain philosophy of the relations of the individual to society. For sane and rational minds, such views are entirely without an emotional side at all, or possess it only

in so far as such social and ethical convictions are artificially reinforced by the suggestion of inherited religious feelings.

Only the novice in psychiatrical and psychological questions will see anything contradictory in the fact that spiritual anomalies will rouse anti-social atavism in one case and unbounded love of humanity in another. The expert knows that one and the same organic disturbance will, according as it is accompanied by depression or excitement, take the form of hatred of the world or philanthropy, between melancholia and mania, or alternate between one and the other.

The psychology and biology of friendship and altruism ought to be studied thoroughly, provided always that sentimental prejudice is avoided. Here it is only possible to refer briefly to the methods and results of a study that is of the greatest importance for a knowledge of human nature and an understanding of individual and social life. According to these conclusions, neither friendship nor philanthropy is a primitive instinct proving man to be naturally a social being. They are views and convictions acquired late, as a result of an artificial civilization, and without deep roots in the life of feeling.

One feeling there is, and only one—not an invention or suggestion of the intellect, nor the mere creation of habit, but a genuine feeling—strong enough to call man out of his selfish isolation and command his relations to others—the sex instinct. It had nothing to do with love originally, and often has nothing to do with it now. Only a slow process of development has ennobled and elevated it. The prehistoric savage and the present-

day brute sees in woman only the satisfaction of momentary desire. When it is satisfied, she is indifferent, even repulsive. As man's consciousness became more varied and refined, the ideas that accompanied his sensual impulses became more lofty. Thus that which roused desire also roused far-reaching, lofty, and illuminating thoughts; woman acquired an attraction and a charm, and roused a devotion far beyond the mere enjoyment of the moment.

Love in its ideal aspect, the side of it that enters into consciousness, the concrete imagery of poetic associations, castles in the air and dream-pictures that make it up, is but a superstructure created by man's acquired habits of thought, knowledge, and imagination upon the basic instinct of sex, which alone is natural. With woman this feeling gives birth to a kind of continuation of itself in the maternal instinct. The sex instinct brings the parents together; the maternal instinct binds the children, first to the mother, and in the course of development to the parents. Thus man, the solitary wanderer, is gathered into a group bound together by a real, organic feeling, independent of reason, and prior to any intellectual culture. In the family we have human individuality completed in its natural form. There can be no doubt that men lived in families before they were obliged to sustain existence by effort and by art. Superficial sociologists often speak as though the organized community and division of labour of bees and ants, their system of earning and spending, and their social arrangements generally, were closely akin to the human State and society, and could serve as an example to it. But the beehive and the ant-heap have

nothing in common with society and the State. They correspond to the family, not to these artificial creations. The community in which bees and ants live is not a State, but the natural family of these insects, in which there is one mother, many fathers, a mass of sexless, and a few sexually distinguished children. It is natural for bees and ants to live in such a community as this, for men to live in families—family being understood purely as it is natural history. With this, the primitive instinct that binds the members of a biological family together, the legal conception of a family has nothing to do. It is the outcome of the development of property, rather than, as Fustel de Coulanges [1] tried to show, of early religious conceptions, although family life had its own rites, its own place in the general cult. Since the family represents the real self-contained completion of the individual, it is natural that this crystallized core should dominate all later developments of human society, and that all the institutions that appeared, such as property, belief, law, rank, and nobility, should centre in the family. They influenced its form and significance, but it was there before them, and is not their outcome.

The sex instinct is the sole social impulse in man that is not due to example, habit, or artificial interests. It is the sole source of sympathetic emotion, even when not apparently roused by the other sex. Where it is restrained or repressed, as in the eunuch, the whole nature dries up, and becomes incapable of feeling for anything or anyone outside itself. Love of child is the

[1] Fustel de Coulanges, "La Cité Antique," Paris, 1888, twelfth edition, p. 39, "The Family."

first transformation of the sex instinct; it appears in a still less differentiated and more unconscious form in youthful friendship: sentimentality, exaltation, enthusiastic admiration for ideas and their exponents, for movements and those who lead them, for groups, classes, nations, and historical figures—all are the outcome of that primitive instinct which reason and imagination have trained to flow along many artificial channels, like the water of a complicated fountain that issues in countless jets from a single source. Bossuet's truest word was: "All is love transformed." A train of thought or act of will which is not at bottom rooted in the rich soil of the sex instinct remains a mere shadow, colourless and bloodless, warmed by no feeling, powerless to issue in act.

But while it is true that sexuality, raised to love in the course of man's intellectual development, holds the world together, and lies at the base of all deeper human interests, it would be false to look upon it as the force which has formed individuals into communities, be they societies, peoples, or States. Love only created the primitive family. This was, of course, not based upon monogamy. The example of the apes, and those human instincts which have not been repressed by civilized morality, enforce the assumption that man was originally a polygamous animal: he took and kept as many wives as he could defend against rivals. The patriarch lived in the midst of his wives and the offspring, to which their mothers were devoted if he was not, without any close intercourse with other families. Children remained with their parents only until they were fully developed; then they went off and started new families.

Descendants certainly did not go far from the parent tree. Neither man nor any other animal wanders unless he is obliged to do so, and of all habits the hardest and most painful to break is that which binds him to a familiar spot. Only very late did he feel any curiosity as to what lay behind the mountains and across the water, still later any desire for the wide distances beyond. The unknown was more terrible than attractive to primitive man. If anyone doubt this, let him observe the mental attitude of the simple man of the people towards foreign parts. Doubtless families of a common origin remained neighbours; they were accustomed to one another, played together as children, and found their pleasure together later on. These groups, near one another and mixing together in this superficial way, might be called hordes, yet it is certain that there was in them no organization, nothing that limited the voluntary movements of the individual.

Man could only live in this free and peaceful blood-relationship, disturbed by no serious strife save that for the possession of some women, so long as it was possible for him to satisfy his needs naturally and without labour. A change came over his relation to his fellows when he was compelled to expend skill and trouble in protecting himself against cold and want. Then he realized the possibility of making them useful. His indifference gave way to a desire for their services. Earlier, the mating instinct alone had brought him into relation with them. Now the desire to subjugate them and save himself trouble by their exertions arose. The original sex instinct was now reinforced by the instinct of mastery and exploitation. The satisfaction of this

second instinct was accompanied by a pleasure comparable in strength and kind to that of the mating instinct. The strong man felt a proud satisfaction in mastering the weak, making him his possession and his thing, disposing of him as he pleased, and making a profit out of him, analogous to that of compelling a woman to the satisfaction of his desires; the selfish joy felt by his manhood in attack and conquest was rooted in the sex instinct, and drew from it its strength. At the beginning of the struggle for existence the two instincts mingled together. Man sought in woman not only the means to this pleasure, but a slave to do his work. Woman, as the weaker, was naturally the first sacrifice. The smallest expenditure of strength and energy was required for her exploitation. Thus the family, created by the necessity of the life force, offered for centuries the easiest opening for parasitism, and does to-day in many cases. The power given by Roman law to the husband and father is the natural rule of all nations; it prevails, although in a weakened and modified form, under the most advanced civilization.

At the lowest stage in civilization the head of the household seeks to have as many wives and children as possible, since they represent the earliest form of wealth —*i.e.*, slaves. When the female children grow up, and can no longer be retained by their parents, he sells them to a wooer in exchange for goods that increase his possessions. The Greek myth of Kronos devouring his own children symbolizes accurately the primitive relation of the head of the house to his family. The Greek story says nothing of the retribution of the children who escaped being devoured. But it is the regular

custom of many savage peoples. When the parents grow old and weak, they are forcibly put to death by their children, who, in some Australian and Malayan tribes, then eat them. Gentle ethnographers excuse the murder of the parents on the ground that it proceeds from a praiseworthy desire to free them from the burden of existence. But such tenderness is hardly to be expected from barbarians. It is far more probable that, when the children become the stronger, they revenge in this brutal manner their earlier subjection, and thus indulge their own parasitic instinct at their parents' expense.

In the course of development land became valuable, first as hunting-ground, then as pasturage, and finally as tillage, and was coveted accordingly. As the younger members of the family grew up, and found their native spot too narrow for them, they began to spread into the neighbouring territory. If it was already occupied, a death-struggle ensued. In primitive times the vanquished were horribly tortured, killed, and eaten. Not till much later were prisoners taken and used as domestic slaves.

The earliest form of parasitism was exercised by man towards his wife and children, so long as they would suffer it. Next came war, under the spur of stern necessity, and with improvement in the condition of life as its object. Those who had not were driven to make war on those who had. Soon, however, it was not only the man who had neither flocks nor herds who attacked the rich, to take from him what he needed and had not, but the rich man who attacked his neighbours, without the excuse of need, in order to increase his own

possessions, or even merely for the ardent pleasure of it. In battle a man realized his personality and its possibilities to the full. Victory heightened his egoism to a kind of rapture, and afforded it an incomparably keen satisfaction in high-handed dealing with the vanquished, whom he tortured, mutilated, murdered, and plundered at his own good pleasure. In these primitive times there was nothing symbolical in the exertions and ardours of battle and victory; there was nothing abstract about it or its consequences. The plans were not laid nor the advantages secured by leaders alone. It was all in the highest degree concrete, and the gain immediate and tangible. Each combatant fought hand to hand with his opponent, grappled his body to him, gripped and wrestled with him, threatened him wildly with look, mien, and gesture, with horrible distortions and hideous cries, throttling, tearing, and then slaughtering him. The conqueror enjoyed the fruits of victory on the spot, slaking his thirst for blood and his greed for plunder. In those days battle was the preparation and the price of the veritable orgy of victory, and a man who had once revelled in it was filled with a perpetual, ardent desire for more. So the old Germans held war as the noblest and most worthy occupation for a man, promised an eternal abode in Valhalla to the fallen warrior, and looked upon a peaceful death as a disgrace.

Probably man is not a warrior by nature. Cowardice is much commoner than courage, and the natural fear of death that underlies our consciousness is only transformed into a contempt for it by the power of example, education, the influence of moral ideas and

standards, and the force of a passion that obscures the consciousness itself. Early man probably only attacked when he was certain of his superiority, and the risk of battle seemed small in proportion to the prize of victory. Hobbes's famous saying that man is a wolf to man must be accepted with the limitation that he is a wolf that attacks sheep, and makes off when he meets with resistance.

When the Greeks raised their heroes to the rank of demigods, and traced their descent from the gods on the side of father or mother, they came nearer to the truth. There seemed something more than mortal in a contempt for death and the reckless encountering of risks bound in human calculation to be fatal, something that could only be explained by kindred to the immortal gods. Pride and idealism can act upon civilized men so strongly that they will dare the extremity of danger without blanching, and even face certain death. But primitive man was no hero. Such heroism as he showed came from sheer ignorance of danger. It was only when he saw no danger that he became bold and enterprising. Thus, weakly individuals, groups, hordes, or tribes, could not long live side by side with stronger ones, to whom their weakness was a permanent temptation that left them no rest short of destroying or subjecting all those weaker members who had not saved themselves by flight. Each tribe thus spread the fear of itself over an ever-widening circle, until it came upon another stronger than itself. The individuals, then, being more or less on an equality, each side could only obtain the more or less certain superiority necessary to stimulate attack by the possession of larger numbers

and greater readiness to serve. Thus, war could not be suddenly undertaken out of hand. It was no longer a single combat between two men or the wild hand-to-hand tussle of two families. Preparations were necessary, alliances and exercises. Individuals must gather round some leader, who had either been chosen or had forced himself upon the others by the force of personality. A plan of action had to be prepared. Those who hung back had to be fortified, those who opposed to be silenced or compelled. Weapons and provisions had to be got ready. In a word, organization was needed. A campaign then assembled a number of people, taught them to exercise foresight, to act together, and submit to command, to conceive of larger purposes, and to regard themselves and their companions as a unity brought together for a common project. If the war ended in victory, the organization, its advantages obvious even to the dullest, survived the cause that had brought it into existence. The leader, who had felt the joys of command, been rewarded by the lion's share of the spoil and of the pleasure of violating, torturing, and executing a very large number of captives, was not likely to wish to give up his position on the conclusion of peace and to return to his former obscure mediocrity. Cincinnatus was certainly a very unusual phenomenon in primitive history. The warriors whom he had led to victory were strongly and often passionately attached to him by the recollection of common dangers and exploits, unless the division of the spoil had created hatred and strife. Enriched by booty, he was in a position to bind his warriors permanently to him by presents or some sort of

pay, and could strengthen the tie between them and himself by a continual succession of further fortunate campaigns and conquests.[1]

Thus the commander is the centre round which the common life crystallizes. The origin of the State lay not in the family, not in the horde, but simply and solely in the camp. There was nothing in the circumstances of a horde of related groups, used to living casually side by side, nothing in the relation of man and wife or of parents and children, that could in any way compel the formation of institutions which confined the freedom of individuals within hard-and-fast limits, divided those who were born equal into rulers and ruled, and imposed upon the individual the fixed forms of a common life which he could not afterwards shake off at will. Only war provided this compulsion. War created the bond which linked the individual to the community. The beginning of the State was not sympathy, but the desire for blood and plunder. It was not any gregarious instinct that brought men together, but the perception that they were more likely to get possession of their neighbour's goods together than alone. It was not in peace, but in the stress and danger of battle, that the idea of solidarity arose. In the early stages of civiliza-

[1] Tacitus, "Germania," xiv.: "Magnum . . . comitatum non nisi vi belloque tueare; exiguunt enim principis sui liberalitate illum bellatorem equum, illum cruentam victricemque frameam. nam epulæ, et quanquam incompti, largi tamen apparatus pro stipendio cedunt; materia munificentiæ per bella et raptus" (A great train can only be maintained by war and violence; they expect from the liberality of their leader the war-horse, and the victorious. Banquets that, though rude, are abundant are a form of pay: war and plunder provide the means for generosity.)

tion free individuals never willingly united for any fruitful creative work, nor could they have been persuaded to join together in any civilizing task. Violence, destruction, and plunder, for which union was an indispensable condition of success, alone gathered them round a leader. Only the stern command of a leader compelled them to common exertion.

War, an acute and exclusive form of parasitism, was alone the cause of the formation of the State, and for long its only, even to-day its principal, object. The army is everywhere regarded as the most important instrument of the State's power. Theoretically, its purpose is loudly proclaimed to be not attack—that is, murder, robbery, and conquest—but defence; although defence would obviously be unnecessary, there being nothing to defend, did not every State discern in every neighbour the permanent intention to attack it, for no other object than that of murder, robbery, and conquest. The highest branch of the public service is considered to be diplomacy—the symbolic embodiment of the war power of the State. The mere presence of a diplomatic representative is a continual reminder to neighbouring States of the army at his back that gives weight to his utterances. He is the menace for war, amicably disguised. It is his duty to spy out the intentions and armaments of neighbouring powers, to aggrandize his own State at the expense of those that seem to him weaker, and enforce his demands on them by the threat of war and the suggestion that it will be more advantageous, and involve less sacrifice on the part of the State in question, to accede than to resist it. Latterly, the efforts of diplomacy have been directed to the

avoidance of war; sometimes it has even gone so far as to consider the possibility of a commercial treaty on a basis of mutual advantage. In earlier times such an action was unknown, and would have been despised. Diplomacy, in its nature and origin as much an instrument of war as an army, is a military development on the line of least resistance. Its object is to obtain satisfaction for the selfishness and greed of the State by the mere spoken or silent indication of the existence of force, without recourse to the sword. It would never have been needed had each State remained within its own limits, and demanded nothing of others, except on the basis of mutual exchange.

The mere existence of an army involved the necessity of maintaining it, and providing the necessary means for that purpose, and for its more and more complete development. Originally the general paid his men from the private property they amassed for him on plundering expeditions; but where the general became the head of a great land and people, and war ceased to be the permanent condition of the community, the army, no longer able to rely upon booty, had to be supported by the community itself. Taxes were levied: at first, extraordinary taxes for a special purpose: so long, that is, as the army was only levied for a certain time to perform some definite task, and could then be dismissed, with the exception of a bodyguard; later, when standing armies arose, regular taxes, which formed a permanent obligation on the part of every inhabitant. The existence of an army made taxation necessary and possible. The State's need of taxes compelled it to see that the citizens were able to pay. A foreign conqueror might

take all that he found, without caring for the ruin of the people. The founder of a State and his successor, unless stupid, frivolous, and profligate enough to echo the Pompadours' "After us, the deluge!" must take heed for the future, cherish the hen that laid the golden eggs, and see that the taxpayers were able to fill the coffers of the State. They therefore endeavoured to develop institutions that might enable the hard-working, productive citizen to grow rich undisturbed, and insure the security of his life and property. Wiser rulers avoided the excessive impositions that left the subject no stimulus to a labour of whose fruits he was deprived, and penalized the poor man who worked for the sake of the idler: as is the case in ill-governed States, where the people are simply ground down by the government. They assisted trade and industry by such well-meant regulations as import dues and commercial treaties. Like Henry IV., they wished that their subjects might have a fowl in the oven on a Sunday, not merely that they might be well fed, but because more can be asked, and got, from well-to-do subjects.

From this consideration all the beneficial institutions in the State arose, even such as do not at a first glance appear to have any connection with an increased taxable and rateable capacity. The State laid roads, rendered rivers navigable, and built harbours in the first instance for the army, but in the second for trade. The names of all subjects were inscribed in official registers, and thus brought within the administrative net, available when any contribution was required. Schools were founded, and every subject forced to rise to a somewhat higher stage of intellectual development, because the

State can do more with brains into which some ray of enlightenment has penetrated than with those that are totally dark. A code of law was established, without which there would have been a standing war of all against all, that would have prevented the productivity of labour and made welfare impossible.

These traits that seem to present the friendly face of culture are revealed to the more penetrating gaze as those of the fierce man of war. All the departments of the State, that have crystallized so firmly and developed in such subtle variety in the course of centuries, emanate from one centre, and this centre is preparedness for war.

Such has been the harsh course of the organization of men into societies and States. So long as nature satisfies their wants, they feel no inclination to combine, but live apart in separate families, in which they are bound by the attraction of the sexes and by brotherhood, itself a form of adaptation of this strongest of all instincts. With the necessity of making exertions to support life parasitism appears. The motive that impels man to seek out his fellows is not a gregarious instinct, as has often been maintained, though without proof, and contrary to all probability and to all psychological evidence, but the profit to be made from them by force or fraud. As long as he can keep the members of his family in subjection he exploits them; then he attacks his neighbours with ravage and slaughter. Victory and its advantages provide him with a devoted following, which makes depredation possible on a wider and more effective scale. The leader understands that he must keep the instrument of this parasitic system in a state of constant efficiency, and creates institutions for that purpose.

He collects the largest possible group of men under his control, and abstracts from them the largest possible share of the fruits of their labour, compelling them to supply him with soldiers, whom he supports by contributions forcibly levied on his other subjects. In so far as he is wise enough to profit by the teachings of experience, he endeavours in various ways to secure, in the subjects who enable him to be a parasite by their service in war and at their expense in time of peace, a certain level of satisfaction in their lives and work, and a certain readiness to pay.

The absurdity of Rousseau's idea that society originated in, and now rests upon, a free contract between equals has long been patent. And the same applies to the notion, that lies at the base of all Socialist theories and systems, that men formed themselves in communities for the execution of great works of social utility which were beyond the powers of individuals. In a future that is certainly not yet in sight men may attain such a height of mental and moral development that they will voluntarily, as the outcome of conviction, undertake some common task in which the profit accruing to any individual from his personal exertion is not at the first glance obvious. The past affords no example of free co-operation of this systematic kind. Work got done by means of severe discipline, or compulsion exercised by men or by institutions representing the crystallized will-power of former men. Everyone evaded work where he could, and shifted the burden of it on to his neighbour. The foundation of the State was neither a contract nor a recognition of the value of rational co-operation: it was organized parasitism, the

exploitation of the weak many by a ruler and the mediate and immediate servants of his power; the exploitation of weak neighbours by war or by treaties imposed upon them by war, or the explicit or implicit threat of war.

Descriptions and explanations of the State are legion. One jurist and political philosopher sees in the State "the organization of the male population of a country to form an independent person directing the common life"; another sees in it "the total resident population within a certain territory united to form an organic moral personality under a supreme power directing the common interests." To quote more of these pleonasms seems to me superfluous. The second definition is a masterpiece of phrase-making. All that has to be proved is assumed, and the impudent assumptions then combined to form a picture, not of the reality, but of the idea which jurisprudence and political philosophy wish to spread. According to it, the State is a totality united "under a supreme power directing the common interests." This is what the supreme power has always tried to make out, since people began to ask for some justification of its claim. History, however, teaches that it never has directed the "common interest," but first and foremost the interest of some individual or family, and then that of the necessary instruments of its power. In the course of development the circle of these instruments widens. In countries under Parliamentary government it embraces not only the army and the Ministry, but the members and their constituents. Even so the supreme power is always invested in a small minority, to which the majority is

sacrificed, as is proved by the advantages enjoyed by the landed interest in the shape of import duties and in direct taxation, etc. All that can be said is, that the supreme power always represents the measures passed for its own advantage as being for the general good. Well-intentioned professors teach that they are so, and the stupid many believe it. Again, it is only by doing violence to the truth that the State can be said to unite the community in an "organic moral personality." "Organic personality" is a meaningless, senseless phrase which corresponds to no idea. The State is a concept, not a personality. It is not an organism in the sense in which that word can be applied to a living thing, but a collection of biologically independent individuals, whose mutual dependence is entirely due to human compulsion.

Moreover, the little word "moral" has been very cunningly smuggled into the definition. Morality plays absolutely no part in the formation of the State. It has proceeded simply and solely with a view to the advantage of the supreme power. The famous saying, "My country, right or wrong," recognizes this with cynical frankness. "My country"—that is, the supreme control in the State, which has throughout centuries taught its subjects that it is synonymous with their country: that it should be dear to them: that they should love it, feel its hard compulsion like a caress, and make the sacrifices that it relentlessly demands of them in no spirit of hatred and imprecation, but with feelings of enthusiasm and delight. The supreme control, then, may commit all the enormities in the shape of massacre, robbery, and fraud that mark every invasion—such, to

take a few concrete examples, as marked the partition of Poland, the wars of the first coalition against France, the campaign of France against the Roman Republic in 1848, the French war against Mexico, or England's attack on the Boer States; yet, because it does all this in the soul-stirring name of country, it is held to be the duty of every subject, even, by the abuse of an honourable idea, his sacred duty, to acclaim these base actions, to support that power that performs them through thick and thin, even to be proud of it. Such is the morality of the "organic moral personality," which the State is supposed to represent.

The name "legal State" is, like the "organic moral personality," a mere servile invention of phrase-mongering professors. The purpose of the State is said to be to secure an equal law for all, in place of mere despotism, and so to protect individual rights. This is only true so far as it concerns small interests and differences among subjects themselves. In such cases there is usually no cause for the supreme power to take one side or the other. It can view the strife with perfect indifference, decide it according to the citation of the law, and see that the individual neither do violence to his neighbour nor seek to protect himself against attempted retribution with his fists. It must, of course, prevent any disorder that would be inimical to the general weal, and hinder the State from disposing of the whole people for its own advantage. Whenever the question at issue is an important one, or the interest of the subject come at all in conflict with that of the supreme power, the law is powerless. The picture of a legal State evaporates, and the State once more ap-

pears as a power organized in the service of parasitic self-aggrandizement. The difference between the despot of the East and the Western community, with its constitutions, codes of law, rules of legal procedure, and questions of appurtenances, is only a difference of form. The despot simply takes the property of his subject and strikes off his head if he is discontented; the legal State compels him, by process of expropriation, to subscribe to a levy, that must in all cases be paid by the other subjects, some possession that all the gold in the world would not have induced him to part with. The despot answers a subject who speaks of his rights with the stick or the axe; the legal State uses its courts to show him his own helplessness, and its government departments to prove the sovereignty of the State, and then, if he make a nuisance of himself by citing the laws, shuts him up in prison or in an asylum. In the "legal" State force is called law, but it is as irresponsibly exercised under this fine name as under despotism. It is small comfort to the helpless individual to have the supreme power going through the hypocrisy of citing articles and paragraphs before violating his right, instead of doing it without such formal pretence.

The touching little story of the miller of Sans Souci is always quoted to illustrate the majesty of the law in a legal State. Here we have a great King and a petty dispute. But had the King been petty and the dispute great, the miller would have found there was no judicial court for him in Berlin. On innumerable occasions States have gone bankrupt, refused to pay interest on their loans, repudiated definite treaties, and appropri-

ated private property. The State can make its sovereignty the excuse for overriding any law binding on all its subjects. Even when it is not itself concerned, the legal State will refuse all assistance in a dispute between a powerless subject and an exceptionally powerful one. The famous suit brought in 1674 by the cabinet-maker James Percy, in which he claimed the title and possessions of the house of the then Earl, now Duke, of Northumberland, was dismissed, although there was no evidence against it. It would go in just the same way to-day. In the course of the last century there has come up again and again the plea of the heirs of a certain Martin to the recovery of their inheritance, a great sum of money deposited in the State Bank at Venice, and appropriated by the French officials in the taking of Venice in 1797. The plea has been as often rejected by the French judicature, merely because the State would be otherwise compelled to hand over the many millions it has unjustly appropriated.

The phrase for which Bismarck has been so sharply criticized, although he never used it[1]—"Might before right"—is perfectly accurate, not as a principle according to which action should proceed, but as a statement of the manner in which it does proceed. Nowadays, of course, the cry of the common good is always raised when the power of the State overrides the rights of subjects or of neighbours weaker than itself. The method is the familiar one of identifying the supreme power in

[1] Georg Büchmann ("Winged Words," eighteenth edition, Berlin, 1895, p. 481) proves that in the Prussian Senate, on March 13, 1863, Count Bismarck expressly refuted the allegation made by Count Schwerin that he had used the phrase, "Might comes before right."

the State with the country, and the advantages of the ruler or ruling class with that of the people as a whole. Right without might is a word only; might can give its arbitrary actions right. If it is strong enough and lasts long enough, it no longer needs to make any actual exertion to give effect to its will. Its will has become right. Right is its symbol—a symbol that often continues to overcome all resistance long after the will behind it has ceased to possess any effective power. But when another will rises in opposition, and tests the energy and resistance of this sublimated might, then the right which has outlived its might dissolves into thin air.

All the high-flown theories of a legal State, the State as a moral being, the State as a living organism which perceives the interests of the people as a whole, have been invented by the quibbling rhetoricians, who devote all the resources of their art to disguising the harsh outline of facts as they are with a decoration of words. They do this by assigning such causes and purposes as are calculated to create reverence in the uncritical multitude, and explaining everything to the advantage of those who profit by the existing order. When Louis XIV. said, "I am the State," he expressed the truth with brutal brevity. It is the shortest and most lucid statement of the fact. The State is the government—originally a ruler, then a class, a circle of families united by relationship and similarity of interests, a conquering race. Its own compelling necessity has led the government to create every institution calculated to insure it the permanent subjection, obedience, and readiness to pay of the majority. The gradual rise of

the State machine in its present universal and complete development has been, and is, directed to one purpose—the exploitation of the many for the advantage of the governing person or class—*i.e.*, parasitism.

St. Augustine had a clear intuition of this when he put, as the heading of the fourth chapter of Book IV. in the "De Civitate Dei," "Quam similia sint latrociniis regna absque justitia"—"now kingdoms remote from justice resemble robber bands"; and continues: "If there be no justice, what are kingdoms but great robber bands? And what are robber bands but little kingdoms?" He then goes on to give the famous classical anecdote of the pirate who was captured and brought before Alexander the Great. When the King asked him how he came to make the sea unsafe, he replied: "Eleganter et veraciter"—"In the same manner that thou makest the earth unsafe; but because I do it in my little ship I am called a robber, and thou who dost it in a great fleet art called Imperator." Thus the Bishop of Hippo makes justice the sole dividing-line between the State and the robber band, without perceiving that when the State has reduced its robbery to a system, and in the course of generations accustomed to it those who are robbed, it calls the system justice.

Fr. Engels [1] observes correctly that civilized society is organized in a State which is "exclusively the State of the governing class, always a machine whose essential purpose is to keep down the oppressed and exploited class." Paul Leroy-Beaulieu, who, unlike Engels, is no

[1] Fr. Engels, "The Origin of the Family, of Private Property, and of the State," sixth edition, Stuttgart, 1894.

Socialist, says the same thing in more measured terms:[1] "The State is an organism characterized by two activities peculiar to it and always present in it—the power to compel all the inhabitants of a district to observe the commands called laws or regulations, and the power to compel them to pay contributions in money, of which it disposes at its pleasure. The organization of the State is thus based upon compulsion, and its compulsion takes two forms—laws and taxes."

The outline drawn by the conqueror, warrior, and oppressor is filled up in the course of historical development in accordance with the standard of civilization. The multitude acquires enlightenment and judgment, and refuses to be plundered lawlessly. The beneficiary of the government has to flatter the whims and humours of the governed. He can no longer satisfy his own desires without a thought of others. He must employ at least a part of the means he has wrung from the people upon objects that appear at any rate to be of general utility, which can be said to do something for the majority in the way of alleviating the struggle for existence or adding some element of material or intellectual well-being to their lives. The circle of the State's beneficiaries widens. It opens to include obscure individuals who have made their way by inherent force rather than by birth or social connections. To use the threadbare political tag, meaningless enough in itself, the State becomes democratic. The majority often succeed in setting up an institution that establishes a material solidarity of interests between themselves and

[1] Paul Leroy-Beaulieu, "L'État Moderne et ses Fonctions," Paris, 1876, p. 40.

the favoured minority, and exploits the descendants of former plunderers for the advantage of the majority—for example, the rising income-tax, State endowment of Old Age Pensions, provision of every sort out of the public funds.

But this partial change of content leaves the form of the State and its methods of compulsion untouched. Its origin in the violence of the warrior, and its purpose as a permanent system of plundering enslaved subordinates, is obvious in the whole and in every part of it.

Free men have always seen in taxes, the earliest form of subject due, an intolerable mark of personal servitude, and continually risen against them. The whole of European history, from the migrations to the French Revolution, is occupied by the contest of territorial chiefs, great or small, who refused to recognize the "legal State," "the moral organism," or "the supreme power controlling the interests of the whole," against the King, who was resolved to break the power of the feudal lords, and subdue them to his will, to put an end to their control of the lands and lives of their dependents, and reserve the exploitation of subjects to himself alone. The State affords no proof of a primitive gregarious instinct in man. Its origin is not due to any instinct to combine and live in a society; its development was not conditioned by the love of neighbours or the sentiment of solidarity. On the contrary, it was invented by selfishness, and carried out by force as the machinery of parasitism. It is upheld by the advantages of order and a general division of labour, by the adaptability of man, by the power of habit, which gradually forms and transforms everything

it touches, and even interpenetrates the emotional life of man, and by the fact that while the majority are dull, utterly incapable of comprehending the causal connection between a number of effects, cowardly and indisposed to effort, the minority, on the contrary, are parasites, filled with a lively sense of their own advantage that sharpens their reason on the practical side, and makes them fertile in expedients for carrying out their ends. They are fully aware of their superiority, and occasionlly even incautious enough to boast of it—as, for example, when the Minister, von Rochow, forgot himself so far as to let slip the words, "the limited intellect of subjects."

CHAPTER VI

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL ROOTS OF RELIGION

ALL political and social institutions government, the payment of taxes, service, obedience, law and its enforcement, compulsory attendance at school, and the mechanism of trade, as well as the State itself, represent the gradual manifestation of a single force, provide the necessary means by which a strong personality exploits its fellows for its own ends. But there is another order of phenomena, whose aim was not originally parasitic, and which did not arise out of violence: the religious feelings, their expressions, and the positive creeds, ceremonies, and priestly orders into which they have crystallized.

The religious feelings are, like the tendency to parasitism, deeply and subtly rooted in the instinct of self-preservation, but they early pursued an independent and separate growth. The instinct of self-preservation in man was not forced into the parasitic channel until natural conditions, becoming unfavourable and even positively hostile, imposed upon him the painful necessity of labour. The religious feeling, on the other hand, was undoubtedly active in primitive man, even while nature abundantly satisfied his wants. Even had the Ice Age never supervened to threaten him with death by cold and starvation, it would have developed

and differentiated. Ignorance alone can account for Volney's childish assertion that religion was invented by priests, or for the question whether there are peoples who have no religion. Such people cannot exist, since religious ideas are formed as the result of biological necessity. To make this plain, the true nature of the religious feelings must be discerned.

I have said that the religious feeling is deeply grounded in the instinct of self-preservation. This instinct expresses itself, on the one hand, in a hunger for knowledge; on the other, in a clinging to life. The desire to investigate the nature of its environment is proper to every living thing whose development has gone beyond a merely passive tropism, in which internal movements and changes proceed in response to external physical and chemical influences, without any apparent intervention of consciousness or will. It is the condition of that differentiated life which no creature can attain without active investigation into environment, and the endeavour to obtain from it a variety of sense impressions which are there compared, combined, and interpreted.

It is only through the constant activity of curiosity that the knowledge of actuality possible at any stage of development is acquired by the living creature, and with it the art of discovering such conditions as are useful, and avoiding such as are dangerous to it. In this way it learns to protect itself against all the harms that threaten its existence, and to provide all that is necessary for its maintenance, including all sorts of pleasures. As the living thing develops, and its needs become more complex, its knowledge must become more various and

delicate, and the curiosity, of which that knowledge is the fruit, stronger and more constant. At the lowest stage of consciousness curiosity can include form and content in the simple question "What?" The living thing wishes to know the properties of the phenomena that enter the field of its consciousness. At a higher stage the question becomes "How?" It is no longer satisfied to perceive the qualities of phenomena through the senses; it seeks also to know the relations of these qualities to one another, the order in which the phenomena occur, the connection perceptible between them, and the extent to which they are interdependent. Finally, at the highest stage the question is "Why?" The living thing no longer solely wishes to know what lies before it, and the manner in which phenomena are observed to pass before experience; it seeks to discern their cause, and to understand the reason which compels everything to be as it is and prevents it from being otherwise.

The question "What?" can be answered by the senses, expressing themselves through the centre of perception. But the answer to the question "How?" cannot be given by mere perception. It transcends the immediate evidence of the senses. For it, the images stored in the memory must be called up and associated, former impressions compared, sifted and selected, and the judgment thence acquired must then be tested by comparison with reality—that is, with new sense perceptions. This premises the existence of higher centres of association and co-ordination. A satisfactory solution to the question "Why?" is not to be obtained from the immediate perceptions of the senses. The reason of

things lies outside of sense experience. It is not immediately perceptible. It can only be divined or deduced. Such an intuition, such a supposition, such knowledge of it as is possible at all, must be the work of the intellect, which creates from the material available in perception something new, not actually existing—a concept. An intellectual representation of the relation that does or may subsist between each phenomenon and those that have gone before or follow after it can only be obtained through the concept. Experiences, when thus grouped under concepts, form orders of ideas that include all the concepts relative to the phenomena whose regular connection has to be investigated. Those concepts that are obviously incompatible will be eliminated by the consciousness, if sane and attentive. This task is intellectual, and it is only rendered possible by the development of the faculty of abstract thought.

Error as to the "What" is hardly possible. The organism has only to determine such concrete characters of phenomena as the development of its perceptive apparatus permits, and unless this is in some way diseased, it will not refuse its office—that is, give inaccurate information or none at all, fail to respond, or produce hallucinations. In that case only will the living thing fail to obtain the possible and necessary information about its environment.

But the answer to the question "How?" is more liable to be false. Let but one link in the chain of individual phenomena under observation be overlooked through fatigue or carelessness, or underestimated by the attention. A fruitful source of error, too, is found

in the tendency to argue by analogy. There is often no concrete connection even between wholly external phenomena: the passage of an electric current along a wire, or the sounding of a distant bell in response to pressure on a knob near at hand, cannot be immediately perceived by our senses, but have to be guessed at and explained by comparison with other phenomena that do fall within the field of direct observation. The analogy may easily be fallacious. A false or misleading interpretation of external features may suggest a similarity where none exists, and lead to the interpretation of the unknown by a known that has nothing in common with it.

To take only one example. Leibnitz was aware that an impulse of the will, developed in the brain, passes along the nerves, and sets up muscular contractions. How does this take place? At that time the only instance known of the transmission of energy to a point far removed from its source was that of a mechanical connection set up by a pull or pressure. The standard instance of this system is a bell-pull. You pull a handle, a wire or cord carries on the movement, and a bell at some distance connected with the cord rings. On this plan Leibnitz then explained the action of the will upon the muscles. The will gives a pull in the brain, the nerves transmit it like a wire, and the muscles vibrate like the bell. Later the theory of electricity was developed. The words "electric stream" and "electric current" appeared. A new analogy suggested itself: that of a system of pipes conveying a fluid, as in the case of an aqueduct or canal. Since the physiologists in the latter half of the nineteenth century regarded the ac-

tivity of the nerves as a manifestation of electricity, they all spoke of the nervous fluid, and conceived of the energy of the will as being transmitted from the brain, along the nerves, to the muscles, in the manner in which a message is forwarded by the telegraphic apparatus along the wires to the receiving station. Nowadays the analogy of the telegram is dismissed with a smile, like Leibnitz's notion of the bell, the tendency being to suppose that chemical changes take place in the nerves, and are transmitted from one end to the other at the rate of about ten metres a second. This suggests the mode of ignition exemplified by a lampwick or a train of gunpowder. Probably this analogy is no more accurate as a description of what goes on in the nervous system than the bell-pull or the telegraphic wire. Thus the answer to the question "How?" though often inexact, will satisfy the questioner in the absence of known facts which invalidate it.

In the question "Why?" the senses can give no help at all. It is all supposition, guesswork, matter of opinion. Yet we have a persistent desire to know not only how, but why, things are as they are. The experiences of our consciousness, which presents events to us as conditioned by one another, and therefore as causally connected, enslaves our thought to the notion of causality; the conviction is permanently imposed upon us that every phenomenon has some necessary and sufficient cause in a preceding one; we cannot rest without some idea of the nature of this cause. As to the adequacy of this idea, we are hardly ever in a position to decide, since we cannot investigate a connection that lies outside the senses. It is developed from the knowledge at our

disposal, and we are content if it is not contradicted by any part of it.

Every organism within the limits of its capacity asks "What?" for unless it could and did perpetually investigate the character of its environment, it could not maintain its existence for a moment. Curiosity as to "How" belongs at least to the higher vertebrates. Comparatively complicated phenomena, like a trap or the mystery of a closed manger-door, do certainly fall within their observation. But the desire to know why is the privilege of man alone. It is, I must add, a privilege hitherto entirely profitless. For all his investigation and thought, all his observation and guesswork, man has not advanced by one hair's-breadth; we are no nearer knowing the real cause of a single phenomenon than our ancestors in the first Stone Age. The endless search for the cause of things may have had a heuristic value, but even so much is not certain. It is quite possible that we should have all the knowledge we now possess had we been content, instead of searching for the cause of things that must for ever elude our search, carefully to observe their order, their mutual relation so far as it can be perceptible by the senses, and the qualitative and quantitative mechanics of their interaction. This assumption seems the more probable since such knowledge as we do possess has been, as a matter of fact, attained without the cognizance of a single cause—or, we may say, of the single cause, since probably there is only one. All our knowledge but goes to prove that we have been able to establish all sorts of facts, and to test their exactitude by useful inventions, without the slightest suspicion of the cause, even in the

case of those that are under our control. Our results therefore serve us, although we do not know their cause, and, indeed, as far as we can judge, we suffer in no way from our ignorance on this point. Without knowing anything of the cause of magnetism in the earth we constructed the compass, which made navigation secure. Without knowing the cause of the relation expressed in Carnot's second formula, we have built steam-engines of the most perfect kind, on the principle that mechanical power is created by a warm body acting upon a cold one. Kepler knew nothing of attraction, yet he discovered his three laws which enabled the movements of the planets to be calculated exactly without explaining them at all. Soon afterwards Newton discovered the law of gravitation, again without any idea of the nature of attraction—that is, of the cause of the phenomenon which he had reduced to an algebraic expression. Observation of natural phenonena is a necessity of our existence, but knowledge of the cause of phenomena is not necessary for this observation, and the desire for it is not biological in its origin, not an expression of the instinct of self-preservation at all. It is the logical outcome of the nature of our consciousness, and the fact that our thought is governed by the law of causality. Only the dullard can fail to draw the conclusion from its premises, and trace a result back to the assumptions on which it rests. The highly civilized man does not resist a tendency which becomes a positive compulsion in the select few. To-day advanced and strictly rationalistic thinkers compel themselves to resist their ratural tendency to conform to the logical habit of seeking for final causes. They have arrived at the conclusion that,

since this final cause lies outside human experience, and beyond its comprehension, reflection upon it must be fruitless.[1] It is, moreover, only a survival of an old delusion to speak of the final cause only as eluding our intelligence; the adjective may go: the first and nearest cause of phenomena is as unattainable, as incomprehensible, as the final. Indeed, as I said above, there is only one cause, at once the first and the last, that has operated from all eternity, and will operate to all eternity. We only imagine that we may be able to discover and understand a first cause because philosophers, as well as uneducated, home-taught thinkers, confuse the cause of phenomena and their concrete concomitants. We are satisfied with saying, "The reason why this glass breaks is that it was pushed off the table"; "The reason why that dog howls is that someone trod on his tail." But in such a statement we fail to distinguish the mere succession of events and their occasion from the reason of their occurrence. The reason why the glass breaks is not the push which sends it off the table, but the law of gravitation, which determines its movement in space, together with the conditions of the molecular composition of the two bodies—namely, the hardness of the ground and the insufficient resistance of the glass.

And beyond this there lies the further question of the constitution of matter. Thus we are, all unaware of it, confronted with the riddle of the universe, and unexpectedly find ourselves face to face with that final cause

[1] Auguste Comte, "Système de Politique Positive," Paris, 1851, vol. i., p. 134: "Research seeks to discover the how, never the why; to discover laws, not causes. . . . The word 'cause' must be banished from the vocabulary of true philosophy."

which even the home-taught thinker sees to be unattainable. It is the same, too, with the howling dog, which raises the whole question of life and sensation, or with any phenomenon whatever. The reasonable course therefore would be to abandon speculation as to final causes. That, however, is now perhaps not within our power. Certainly it was not within the power of earlier men, who had not learned to examine the contents of their consciousness with care and distinguish sharply between concepts. They could not escape the compelling idea of a "Why?" They had to seek for the cause of things, and since it is agonizing to leave unanswered a question that is always coming up and always present to the consciousness, the answer was such as the stage of their knowledge permitted them to find or to invent.

The readiest explanation was that known as the hypothesis of the Demiurgos, which Plato has developed with great expenditure of rhetoric. Primitive man could not clothe his vague ideas in the polished language of the Athenian philosopher, but his arguments were much the same as Plato's. When he saw an implement of stone, he knew that someone must have made it, even though he had not been there to see it done. Generalizing this theory, he deduced from it that all that exists must, like his implement, have been made by somebody. By whom? By some unknown creator, craftsman, or artist—a Demiurgos. Plato failed to see the fallacy of this generalization; how should it have been perceived by primitive man, whose unpractised thought generally proceeded by a series of leaps? He did not see the horns of this dilemma—either everything that exists

must have a creator, a Demiurgos, in which case the Demiurgos must have one, and the creator of the Demiurgos, and so on for ever in an endless chain too ludicrous to be conceived; or, not everything that exists must have a creator—there can be something that has existed for all time, uncreated. In this case the assumption of the Demiurgos is unnecessary. The universe itself may be the eternal, uncreated—an idea no more and no less impossible than that of an eternal, uncreated Demiurgos. The extraordinary thing is that Plato provides his Demiurgos with material that has existed for all eternity, of which to make the world, and then deduces from the existence of this world, that he has himself declared eternal, the necessity for a creator, although, by his own assumption, the creator need create nothing, merely adapt what exists.

Primitive man did not thus criticize his own effort to understand the cause of the world. He satisfied his search for the why of the universe by the answer: "The world exists because a master-craftsman created and maintains it." He made an idea of this creator for himself. As a rule he imagined him in human form, but sometimes as a huge beast before whom he went in fear. The greatness of the works of the unknown creator proved him to be of huge strength and power. Man's anthropomorphism was easily satisfied with a world creator in human form; his wretched conception of the Demiurgos proves the poverty of his imagination. He simply gave it the attributes, on an immensely exaggerated scale, of man, of terrifying wild beasts, or astonishing natural phenomena. The chief in whose territory he dwelt provided him with his type. The

features of the Demiurgos were those of a prehistoric ruler and conqueror. He was stronger, more courageous, fiercer, and more cruel than other creatures. He demanded unconditional obedience. All must be subservient to his will. He was only to be approached with the mien of abject humility proper to the vanquished, trembling for his life and suing for mercy, hands upraised to show that they bore no weapons, body kneeling or prone upon the ground, ready for the lord to set his foot upon the neck or strike it with the deadly stroke. He was jealous, suspicious, angry, incalculably moody, greedy, and vain. To keep him in a good humour it was necessary to load him with gifts, and offer him the most cherished treasure one possessed. He could be most effectually propitiated by human sacrifice. Prayers, entreaties, or grovelling flattery might soften his wrath, and he was never weary of noisy and fulsome praise. Barefaced flattery, unworthy adulation, and slavish subservience were the most hopeful means of turning aside his blood-thirsty wrath, and even of obtaining favour and protection against enemies, and his assistance in any plan of war, plunder, or reprisal. The godheads of the earliest mythology preserve the traits of the prehistoric and primitive chief. When we have studied the sacrificial rites, the incantations, prayers, hymns, and ceremonies of religion, we have as complete a picture of the relations between our remote ancestors and their chiefs as if we had seen them with our own eyes. One observation, that seems strangely enough to have escaped the sociologists, should be made at this point. The traditional ideas of the creator throw upon the dark background of the past an extraordinarily vivid

picture of the primitive warrior, conqueror, and exploiter of the weak. They do more than that. They cast a strong light on the primitive constitution of human life, and afford an overwhelmingly powerful witness to the fact that men, instead of originally forming a horde of equal beings with equal rights, led to battle by some strong man, but ruled by no one, must, as far back as the memory of the species goes, have been unequal in might and right, ordered in ranks, and controlled by authority. This authority may have been at first the head of the family. Before long it was assuredly the violent, plundering conqueror and despot, who subdued to his service all he could reach by the might of his arm or overcome by his warriors. His subjects trembled before him in perpetual, abject fear of death, much as the people of Dahomey must have done before their king, previous to the French conquest.

How could men who lived free and equal in hordes that shifted from place to place at their own sweet will ever have found in their experience the idea of a mighty God whose frequent anger had to be propitiated by currish fawning, supplication, flattery, and sacrifice, who could be quieted by threats and circumvented by deceit? —an idea quite natural to a pack of slaves, who imagined their God in the image of the despotic ruler who cracked the whip above their heads.

This model has prevailed down to the present day. Man did not create God, to use Feuerbach's well-known phrase, in his own image, but in the image of a certain human type, the chief or king. He always believed in a monarchical government and creation of the world. The development of the idea of God proceeded along

the lines of the development of monarchy. The cannibal monster of prehistoric and primitive times gradually became the civilized ruler. Instead of butchering slaves and striking off heads with his own hands, wading in blood and claiming every woman in his domain for his harem, he sets before himself an ideal of goodness and wisdom, recognizes duties to his subjects, watches over justice and order within his territory, and finds pleasure in performing the office of a natural Providence so far as to bring unlooked-for happiness into the lives of individuals. So the God of human imagination ceased to resemble a greedy, cruel, and coarsely sensual negro chief, and gradually became an enlightened being, all gentleness and love, like an Augustus, whom the Syrian Greeks called Σώτηρ, the Saviour; a Marcus Aurelius, whose stoicism has influenced sixty generations of thoughtful men, and influences them to-day; an Alfred, on whom love and veneration conferred the name of Great, or St. Louis, reverenced as the embodiment of justice. The world-ruler was surrounded, on the model of an earthly being, by a court of nobles and worthies, the archangels and saints, and a bodyguard of angels. The Greek gods carried on wars, and won glorious victories over rebellious giants. Later religions conceived of neighbouring rulers and rival kings carrying on inherited feuds (Ahora Mazda and Ahriman), or rebels, who were overthrown and condemned to eternal incarceration in subterranean dungeons (Lucifer). The source of all these fantastic images was the same—the necessity to co-ordinate and explain phenomena in a single cause, the desire to know, which is the instinct of self-preservation on the intellectual side. The idea

of God is the earliest answer given by the species, with the knowledge then at its disposal, to the constant question as to the why of the world and of life, and it is the answer that the majority of the species still finds satisfactory.[1]

But the desire to know is not the sole expression of the instinct of self-preservation. There is another, stronger and more immediate—the desire for life, the fierce, almost desperate, clinging to existence. This desire for life is the second psychological root of religious feeling. Man must very early have awakened to the aspect of life that presented itself to the Buddha Siddharta in the well-known encounters on his walk through the gardens of Kapilavastu. He passed in turn a broken and decrepit old man, a suffering sick man, and a funeral procession. His fourth encounter is not relevant here. He recognized the eternal enemies that for ever threaten and finally destroy the comfort, happiness, and life of man—age and its infirmity, disease, and most fearful of all, death. Man, like the Sakya Muni, has always been troubled by these enemies, which have caused most painful reflections in thoughtful minds.

He has probably submitted with least resistance to the doom of growing old. It comes on slowly, almost

[1] Beda Venerabilis ("Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum, book ii., chap. xiii.) gives a charming concrete example of the desire to know in man, and the childish credulity with which any would-be explanation is accepted. Before King Edwin's council an English nobleman recommended that the religion brought by the Papal Legate Paulinus should be accepted, on the ground, "Here below the life of man seems tolerable, but of what comes after and what has gone before we know naught. If the new teaching have some tidings thereof to give us, I think we shall do right to accept it."

unperceived. Since the decay of the faculties corresponds to an ebb in all the needs and desires for which they are necessary, its gradual progress is not vividly present to the consciousness. At the dawn of reflection, old age was perceived to be the law of life, subject to no exception. Human thought is habitually satisfied with things as it has always known them, and does not go further to ask whether they must always be so. Nevertheless, even the law of age does sometimes meet with a dull resistance, especially in those cases where any feeling outlives its natural means of satisfaction. Man longs for eternal youth. He can find no more wonderful and enviable attribute with which to endow his Gods. His desires are revealed by the fairy-tales of the fountain of Youth, the philosopher's stone, or the magic herbs of Medea—proof of the pleasure he finds in dreaming of delights denied to him by nature.

Of sickness he was much more impatient. His habit of thought led him to see an analogy between his bodily sufferings and the wounds and bruises that he got in hunting or at war. He knew the cause of these injuries to be the armed foe or wild beast, and imagined a similar cause for his internal and cutaneous diseases. They must be the effect of an attack from some enemy or evil being who was not human. The enemy who brought such infirmities upon him was the more uncanny from the fact that he was invisible to his prey, who could form no idea of his nature, his weapons, nor the time and place of his attack. This extraordinarily cunning foe inspired him, because unknown, with a far greater terror than the warrior he met in the open field or the wild beast that fell upon him with teeth and

claws, horns and hooves. It naturally occurred to him to try to pacify the enemy, against whom he could not defend himself, by presents, sacrifices, and prayers. The suggestion of wise men, or those whom he thought to be wise, that he should oppose the unseen foe by a stronger foe of the same order, accorded well with his habits of thought. He tried then to secure this all-wise, invisible ally and protector, and imagined everything that was incomprehensible, mysterious, and dark, such as magical incantations, extraordinary rites, and every kind of hocus-pocus, to be the appropriate means to that end.

Before death man was helpless. His reason could not comprehend that he must cease to be and disappear, leaving no trace. His feelings struggled feverishly against such a doom. Although constantly faced with the spectacle of death and corruption, he persuaded himself that this condition did not imply an end of existence. He concluded, from the extremely superficial resemblance between the sleeping and the dead, that death was a kind of sleep from which there was an awakening, only that the sleep was deeper and the awakening longer in coming. His dream-life, in which he saw those who had died, mingled and spoke with them, suggested to him that the dead continued to exist, returning at night to visit the living, while during the day they resided in some place unknown. He pondered how the dead man whom he had seen buried, decomposed or consumed by fire, came to visit him in his dreams, sound and whole, even younger and more comely than in life. Naturally enough he invented the notion of a second being, in which the principle of life itself resided, which inhabited

the human body, could live on in separation from it, and appear to the living man in dreams. Further developments of this same invention are the Egyptian idea of a spiritual double, reappearing in the astral body of contemporary occultism; the Hellenistic conception of a shadowy existence in the under-world; the belief in the migratory soul, perpetually reincarnated, which is found among many primitive peoples, and is widespread, especially in India—which occurs even in Schelling, and is found where one is almost horrified to discover it, in a thinker generally so lucid as Lessing ("The Education of the Human Race"); and, indeed, the general conception of the existence of the soul, of immortality, of Heaven, and of Hell. No single fact supporting any of these hypotheses—the existence of the soul, its immortality, its sojourn in a supra-mundane realm—has ever been cited in a material or intellectual form capable of analysis by a thinker worthy of being called one. Nevertheless, the majority go on persuading each other without any thought of proof. They are satisfied with assurances and assertions. The argument constantly reiterated by theologians, and even by philosophers,[1] is enough for them. "We have such an imperious desire for immortality, and so strong an inward conviction of existence of our spiritual personality after death, that we cannot possibly be deceived about it."

Were anyone to say, "I am quite certain that I shall one day be rich; I have an intense desire for it, and a

[1] Popular philosophers, it is true. The argument quoted above appears in M. Mendlessohn's "Phædo; or, The Immortality of the Soul."

secret voice whispers to me that my desire will be realized," he would be laughed at, and his conviction certainly not credited. Yet this secret voice, this intense desire, are considered sufficient security for personal immortality. That is to say, we wish to be convinced. We are angry with a level-headed critic who tries to dissipate the dream of immortality. All our dread of death makes us cling to the idea of escaping it by some fabulous privilege. Yet, all the time these pleasant and comforting ideas are being built up by our eager desire for continued existence, and co-ordinated into a system that formally satisfies the logical demand of our consciousness up to a certain point, the life-instinct remains constantly aware that all these dreams of a soul, immortality, and the hereafter, are but cobwebs. Their specious defiance of death falls to pieces before its unconquerable horror of it. The idea of immortality may have made death easier to many who found comfort in it. But the thought of his own death fills the most convinced believer with a terror that is meaningless if the grave be really the door into a new, eternal life, no longer shadowed by the fear of death.

The desire to know, appearing in the consciousness as a perpetual question, "Why?" produced the invention of the Demiurgos as an adequate living cause of all phenomena, while the life-instinct, unable to do away with the inexorable fact of death, has invented personal immortality. These two systems of ideas, centering in the belief in God and immortality, necessarily coalesced. Alike divorced from perception and observation, resting upon no basis of fact, including no element of experience, pure products of the imagination, stimulated by

an emotional desire, they take their rise from and develop in the same circles of thought and feeling, and inevitably combine.

The way in which men picture God and their own immortal essence depends upon and varies with the general knowledge and views of the time. In pre-civilized times God was conceived as a violent tribal chieftain; later He became a constitutional ruler, a judge, a loving father. The definite form and outline of the picture became blurred; its colour faded away, and the whole melted to a shadowy image compatible with any view, even with that of science. Spinoza regarded God, whom he stripped of personality and its most important attribute, consciousness, as synonymous with the universe; Schelling made Him an Absolute, which conveyed no idea at all to himself or anyone else; others excluded Him from the world, and left Him only an incomprehensible existence outside of Being[1] in some sphere of pure spirituality (whatever that may be), entirely disconnected from the sphere of phenomena. Finally, the use of a jargon, remote alike from thought and from reality, gave currency to the phrase, so often repeated in the last decades, that faith has nothing to do with knowledge, that they occupy distinct provinces in the realm of thought. Certainly a knowledge that rests upon the verifiable basis of experience has nothing to do with a faith whose content, even when dignified by the name of "inward events," is really from beginning to end nothing but subjective invention. The formula

[1] Frédéric de Rougemont, "Les Deux Cités," two volumes, Paris, 1874, vol. i., p. 1: "Eternity dwells outside of time and of space. Pure spirit exists nowhere. Immutable, it is always the same."

is, however, inadmissible, becauses it suggests that faith and knowledge, though different from and independent of each other, possess equal value. To assume this is to put dream, chimera, and delirium on the same level as the results of strict observation and the evidence obtained from the senses after careful examination and experiment. Where that is done, the desire for knowledge is still instinctive and obscure. It has not submitted to criticism, tested itself by actual facts, and risen to a desire for truth.

The process which has refined and spiritualized faith in a Demiurgos almost out of existence was extended to the idea of the soul and its immortality. The ideas are naturally connected. From the very first the assumption of the presence in the body of another substance, not identical with it, but of a finer essence, suggested that this substance survived the death of the body. Originally this idea was crude and childish, like the belief in God. Primitive man thought of his soul as the shadow of his body; it was uncanny like anything vague and unknown. He imagined it possessed of superhuman power, but also full of malice, cruelty, and all other evil qualities. As a rule, he had little doubt of its intention of torturing the living and doing them all possible harm. Only where ancestor worship was introduced was the reasonable conclusion drawn that parents and ancestors at least had no reason to be evilly disposed towards their children and descendants, so long as they paid them due honour and allowed them to want for nothing; that their souls, instead of being fearful, might be looked to for kindness and protection. But apart from this special case, the departed spirit was

either, as the Greeks imagined, a poor, pitiable shadow that dragged out a joyless existence in the chill darkness, glad of a drink of warm blood, and powerless to help itself or the living; or, as all races that live in a state of nature believe to this day, and most races doubtless believed before they were civilized, a wild and fearsome ghost, happily only permitted to rage at night and in certain spots, against which there were various means of defence. The spirits could be propitiated, like their more powerful and terrifying God, by sacrifices, secret words, magic formulæ and incantations, and kept at bay and baffled in the execution of their fell intents by rites and amulets, whose symbolism lies outside the limits of this work.

This imagery presented no difficulty so long as the earth was conceived of as a hollow orb, and the heavens as a crystal roof above it. There was convenient room for an under and upper world, peopled respectively with ghosts and demons, Gods, angels, and saints. Confusion arose, however, when the Copernican theory taught that the world was a ball, rotating on its axis, and swinging free in space. The fancied Paradise and Hell had to be removed. The under-world, instead of being under the earth, was placed in its unknown interior; the upper world was transferred from the unimaginable ether above the visible arch of heaven to other heavenly bodies remote from earth—the sun, and stars. This idea, far from being confined to the sentimentality of ignorant people, is found in Schelling among others. There are professional exponents of the worship of words who take his confused and meaningless verbosity for philosophy, even for science! Accord-

ing to a more subtle interpretation, which skilfully eliminated from the idea any kernel of meaning, the soul, having no extension, is an effluence from God, into whom it is resumed on the death of the body. By means of this senseless formula the need of any place for its abode is got rid of. But even thus sublimated, the soul retains the trace of its descent from the crude spook of primitive man, and its origin in the repugnance of the consciousness to its own annihilation.

Such is the natural history of religion, apart from the mysticism in which the whole of this important province of biology and psychology has been smothered. It arose from the desire for knowledge, which is a form of the instinct for survival, and immediately from the instinct for survival itself.[1] These two roots are firmly fixed in consciousness and subconsciousness. Man will always desire knowledge. His thirst for it can only cease with the realization of one of two highly improbable hypotheses—omniscience, or dull resignation to

[1] Lucretius's famous statement, quoted by Feuerbach, "Primus in orbe Deos timor fecit"—"It was fear that first made Gods upon the earth"—is highly superficial, and fails to reach the psychic sources of the phenomenon described. The whole of the admired Fifth Book of the "De Rerum Naturâ" is merely the expansion of this notion that belief in Gods arose from the terror aroused by the vast spectacle of nature ("Unde etiam nunc est mortalibus insitus horror," etc. . . . "cui non animus formidine divum—Contrahitur, cui non conrepunt membra pavore—Fulminis horribili quum plaga torrida tellus—Contremunt," etc.). But this fear is only a special case of the general law of the life force expressed negatively in the fear of death. Thunder and lightning did not suggest that Gods existed: it was the fear of death which was brought before man by the thunder and lightning, and threatened him in them, that suggested such thoughts. Moreover, the fear of death is but one source of faith. It also arose from curiosity to know the reason of things.

ignorance. He will, moreover, always cling to life. Apart from the rational recognition of the worth of existence resulting from reflection, the life-process diffuses through all the cells of his being a constant sense of pleasure, which he could not renounce or even conceive of renouncing without a kind of horror. In old age the pleasure of existence declines as the life-process in the cells loses its strength and regularity. When it is no longer the dominant note in the kinæsthesis of the body, the desire for life is gradually extinguished, and gives way to an indifference that becomes a need for repose and even a positive desire for death.

The permanent pleasure of existence may again be overthrown or extinguished by the bodily and mental distress caused by sickness or moral disaster, and in that case desire is transferred from the preservation to the annihilation of life. These exceptions, however, apart, the desire for life is always present, and the idea that the extinction of personality can neither be avoided nor delayed is intolerable alike to consciousness and feeling. Therefore, man will always try to explain phenomena, reflect on the cause, or at least on the connection and order of events, revel in the joys of existence, and shudder before the horror of death; for the religious feeling within him inexorably forces these questions upon him and he must listen to his own soul. That his strongest emotions are associated with it is obvious from its very nature. Strong emotions are aroused by anything that affects the deep roots of life, whence both consciousness and personality grow and draw their strength. The laws of association, moreover, explain

how an extraordinary emotion, even if it originate in some other source, will rouse the basic emotion that vibrates between life and death, and gather force from it. Therefore a religious note sounds in the deeper notes of great love, profound passion, desperate fear, and the mighty impression produced by the beautiful and the sublime; and since thought is influenced by sentiments, even to some extent polarized by them, it is clear that any religious excitement that penetrates the soul with a sense of the mystery of life and its impending doom will occupy the consciousness with this question of eternity, and cause the ideas to group themselves into fantastic inventions, suppositions, surmises, dreams, or ordered systems. Religious emotion leads the thoughts away from reality and experience into a world of dreams. There is something of a religious character in any dream that draws the consciousness away from the region of natural percepts and judgments to wander over the boundless ocean of imagination. It is very pronounced when the brain is engaged in artistic invention or any of those æsthetic functions that are biologically connected with the emotions of sex. Joy, wonder, excitement, agitation, longing, devotion—all these spring from the same subconscious root as the religious emotion. When the religious mood is heightened, as it may be, to enthusiasm, ecstasy, or transfiguration, the different elements are almost indistinguishably fused.

Religious feeling arose in man when his intellectual development led him to ask the question "Why?" and forced the fact of death upon him. It is an open question whether it will be extinguished when man finally

realizes that it is quite useless to seek to know the causes of phenomena, and directs his desire for knowledge to other attainable ends, and when his instinctive repugnance to the dissolution of his personality subsides, and he learns to think with indifference of his inevitable end. Even then, in all probability, the old longings and anxieties of primitive man will break atavistically upon the reason at its task, like snatches of some distant melody that will seem beautiful and lofty and worthy of being fostered by art. This notion was expressed by Dr. F. Strauss ("The Old Faith and the New: a Confession"), by M. Guyau ("D'Irreligion de l'Avenir"), and by myself ("Conventional Lies of Our Civilization"). We found ourselves in agreement in holding that in the civilization of the future, art would take the place of faith, and concerts, plays, exhibitions, and æsthetic celebrations of every sort, that of the Church service. Certainly the ideas originally called up by the religious sentiment will lose their connection with it, and gradually fade away.

A sentiment so strong, deep, and general as the religious naturally could not fail to influence the mutual relations of mankind; but its influence has been enormously exaggerated. Dozens of would-be philosophic historians have, with an air of great wisdom, repeated Goethe's very arbitrary statement that all wars have been wars of religion. Schelling saw in religion the real content of history. Bunsen regarded it as its earliest and strongest motive force. All the facts are against them. It was not from religious motives that the Romans first attacked and defeated their neighbours in Central Italy, then conquered Italy, and finally the

whole world, but from the desire for profit and mastery —*i.e.*, from the parasitic impulse.

Religious motives are far to seek in the migrations by which the European States were formed. The Mongol invasion in the Middle Ages certainly had nothing to do with religion, and only far-fetched sophistry of the most specious kind could discover any religious motives in the revolutionary and Napoleonic wars. There are so many political, economic, and social causes to be taken into consideration even in those wars that appear to have been fought on religious grounds, such as the seven hundred years' struggle of the Iberians, Romans, and Goths against the Moors in Spain, the Crusades, and the Thirty Years' War, that a closer examination diminishes the part played by religion even there. The real truth is that any emotion common to men draws them together, and the religious emotion, being the strongest, does this most of all. Those who have laughed or cried together are no longer strangers. How much more powerful, then, than the superficial emotions of a chance and transitory feeling of mirth is the bond created by similar views of the world and of life, here and hereafter, and above all, by a worship of the same God or Gods! Not only primitive man, but the cultivated believer of to-day, feels that here is something more than a mere abstract philosophy. It has a practical significance, as securing the favour of supernatural powers. And if the godhead be an all-powerful conqueror and king, whose enmity is deadly, his good-will an unequalled protection and security, one must feel it to be of the greatest importance that he should be universally worshipped, and regard oneself as personally endan-

gered by anyone whose refusal to do honour to the national divinity may bring down his rage upon the people as a whole. The self-righteousness natural to man, and his instinctive aversion to anything different from himself, subversive of his habits, or opposed, in a manner that he feels to be provocative, to his mode of thought and feeling, afford sufficient explanation of the fanatical hatred of different beliefs—a hatred, however, that has more often caused the persecution of minorities at home than war abroad.

No one who wished to gain ascendency or influence over mankind could overlook or neglect a feeling so universal, mighty, and deep-rooted as religion. There soon arose a class, differentiated from the multitude, which claimed to know more than they did of supernatural powers, to stand in a closer relation to them, and to possess a greater influence over them. It assumed a monopoly of the highly advantageous position of go-between for the gifts that accompanied the sacrifices and prayers of the faithful, and the favours accorded them in return by Gods, ghosts, and spirits. These mediators, who lived by faith, and claimed for themselves the possession of supernatural knowledge and power, formed either a class recruited from individuals, like the Griots among the West African negroes, or the medicine-men among the North American Indians, or a caste. This caste might be, like the Indian Brahmans, descended from conquerors, who had won by the sword the privileges they now tried to maintain, without exertion or danger, by means of the prestige of terrifying legends; or like the Priests and Levites, when the Jews were an independent people,

members of a more intellectual class, who knew how to assume the rôle of the favourites, confidants, and ministers of supernatural powers.

This priestly parasitism was not always the cool and calculated deceit that it appears on a shallow interpretation. Actions that are rooted in the subconscious mind of man, and extend back to its prehistoric and primitive past, are rarely entirely self-conscious. The latter-day priest, face to face with an old, often an immemorial institution, a Church on firm foundations, with dogmas and rites crystallized by long tradition, does not trouble himself about its origin, authenticity, or ultimate meaning. Possibly he believes the doctrines he has learnt and has to teach. To him the priesthood is a dignity, an office, like any other. It seems to him right and fitting that it should afford him a regular income and certain moral advantages. But his enjoyment is disturbed by no reflection, save perhaps for an occasional qualm as to whether he really gives believers a fair return for their money. Once a career is regularly recognized by society and the State, people enter upon it without any higher consideration than that of personal advancement. They feel that they have done their duty if they fulfil the tasks prescribed, and attain the external positions to which it leads—preferments, dignities, and benefices, etc. So, it is quite possible for a man to be a priest to-day, and yet a thoroughly honest, upright man. He may never call in question the character of his profession, or see that it is an exploitation of the absurd ideas of mankind in general. It is possible that the Roman augurs could not look at one another without laughing. Nevertheless, there must have been

plenty of haruspices who conscientiously interpreted the liver of the sacrificial beast as they had learned to do from the *templum,* whence the priesthood acquired their instruction in the significance of animal entrails. An astrologer who had drawn a perfectly regular horoscope—no easy matter, but one involving considerable astronomical knowledge—was certainly on good terms with his conscience.

The government could not afford to allow religion to be outside its control. The advantage, even the necessity, of establishing relations that would place it in the service of the State was soon perceived. It was easily done. Since men imagined God as a king, the king could play the God. The great Asiatic despots and the Egyptian kings assumed god-like honours; Cæsarean Rome permitted altars to the ruler to be set up in the temples. When the ruler was not God Himself he was, like Alexander the Great, the Son of God, and of god-like descent, like the Japanese dynasty or the old Norse and pagan Germanic ruling houses, which claimed to spring from Thor or Odin; or at least ordained by God, as is maintained to-day by all rulers by the grace of God. The State was created and is maintained by the power of the ruler and the fear of the ruled. The ruler soon saw how great an economy of strength would be involved if the fear aroused by his weapons could be strengthened by the fear of supernatural powers, and he tended this fear as carefully as the other. His warriors and attendants were adorned with magnificent garments, decorations, and symbols, so that their aspect might strike terror to the hearts of his subjects, and fill them with wonderment, respect, and fear. And

the impression of his power was further heightened by the magic of supernatural descent and relationship. The crown became more impressive when surrounded by a halo. Faith became a pillar of the throne, and so long as the king assured the priest of his privileges, he was his trusty bodyguard.

The subject learned in church the theoretical doctrine of obedience that was practically enforced by the armed agents of the royal will. The advantage for the ruler was so great that he maintained the Church as a public institution only second in importance to the army. Any attack upon the Church was regarded as an attack upon the ruler, who put at its disposal full powers of persecuting and exterminating critics, enemies, or recusants. The entire intellectual discipline of the people was handed over to the Church, whose doctrines were assigned priority in the education of the young and the intellectual life of the people as a whole: and this although its unproved assumptions formed the sharpest possible contrast to all the rest of the teaching of the schools which the State endowed. "The faith of the people must be maintained," is merely another way of saying, "The submission of the people to their rulers, and their readiness to pay dues and taxes, must be maintained."

The ruler provided for the protection of his own interests by using the authority of the State directly and indirectly to secure that faith, piety, and resignation to God should be esteemed and inculcated in schools, from the pulpit, in literature and art, and stamped with general official recognition, and to impose a moral value for these qualities upon public opinion. No State in histori-

cal times has ever anywhere failed to avail itself of the religious feeling and faith to strengthen and support its power. The first instance of separation of State and Church is that of the French Republic. There is no other example of such a thing. There have been States that recognized no official religion, and permitted their citizens the free exercise of any, but nowhere in the past, or with the exception of France in the present, can a State be found which has expressly severed itself from the visionary ideas of faith, does not use it in its ordinances for the spread and maintenance of its power or the furtherance of its own ends, or assign it any value. The French innovation is a bold attempt to build the State on reason and power alone, in the belief that the citizens, seeing the necessity of State regulation, and rationally accepting force as the means for carrying it out, will obey the laws and accede to the demands of the State. The boldness of the attempt is its newness. As a matter of fact, with the exception of the Jews, and perhaps of the Tibetans, the State, even when ruling with the help of faith, has never relied upon religion alone. It has never trusted to the fear of God to induce the subject to pay his taxes, shed his blood, or obey his superiors. The Church has always had the canteen behind it, the priest the gendarme to enforce his sermons with punishment, imprisonment, and the gallows. The real difference between the worldly and the sacerdotal State is much less than the theoretical. But it is significant that one State should shake off an immemorial and still convenient fiction, should refuse to embellish practical violence by a theory of Divine ordinance, should

decline a supernatural origin for purely utilitarian human arrangements, and refrain from uplifted eyes and unctuous tones when making demands of its subjects.

As civilization advanced, the religious feeling, representing as it does the instinct of self-preservation in its twofold aspect, the desire for knowledge and the fear of death, naturally produced various types of positive religion, from crude fetish worship to the refined hair-splitting of "enlightened" monotheism, as reduced to a philosophic system. It is superfluous to ask whether a phenomenon that seems an inevitable incident of development is useful.[1] Nevertheless, since the age of enlightenment the question has often been raised whether religion is useful to man, and answered as a rule in the affirmative, even by the emancipated. They credit religion, if not with creating civilization, at least with hastening its advance. They allow that it has developed man's moral nature, subdued his ferocity, taught him gentleness and love for his fellow-men, and comforted him in distress.[2] These are very generous admissions. Not one of them can be regarded as proved. Civilization has not developed thanks to religion, but in spite of it. Religion has not exercised a

[1] Voltaire ("Essai sur les Mœurs et l'Esprit des Nations," part ii., p. 205) answers the question in a decided negative: "Religion is the chief cause of all the sorrows of humanity. Everywhere useless, it has only served to drive men to evil, and plunge them in brutal misery. . . . It makes of history . . . an immense tableau of human follies."

[2] J. J. Rousseau, "Émile," I., iv.: "[Christianity] has certainly made it [government] less blood-thirsty. This can be proved by comparing it with ancient [pre-Christian] governments."

favourable influence upon it, but it upon religion. There is an amazing want of logic in attributing the amelioration of manners to religion. As a matter of fact, this amelioration exercised a softening and humanizing effect upon religion, which was at first bloody and fearsome wherever it was found.

The first harmful effect of religion was that it satisfied man's desire for knowledge by means of a perfectly arbitrary invention. The average man is so constituted that any assertion confidently made and stubbornly maintained has an immediate effect, and carries more complete conviction than a careful and sober proof to which he is not able to give the sustained attention it requires. To man's inquiry as to the cause of things, this reply was given by those who invented the religious fable and its later professional exponents, the priests: "The world was created by the Gods, who can free you from suffering and death; your souls are immortal," etc.; and the timid questioners believed it, as children believe the answer their mother gives them, in a tone of conviction, when they ask whence they came: "The stork brought ye." Man asks for the bread of knowledge; religion gives him the stone of a fairy-tale, which, though indigestible, fills the stomach, gives a false satiety, and arrests the wholesome hunger that impelled them to seek salutary food. It was easier to give man a fictitious than a true answer to the questions about eternity that troubled him, but the effect was fatal, in so far as it led him to imagine that he had the knowledge he sought, and so arrested his natural impulse to win, through effort and mistakes, a real insight into the connection of phenomena. It is no reproach to religion

that it invented fabulous explanations of the world. It arose inevitably at the stage when the mind of man was capable of the play of imagination, but incapable of serious observation, critical examination, or rational interpretation. At the same time, it cannot be said to have assisted his intellectual advance. It stereotyped a childish phase because of the practical interests bound up in it—the interests of the priesthood, of the government, of all those who profited by a public system in which the majority are induced to submit to exploitation with patience by the belief in a visionary hereafter that promises a choice between dazzling honours and recompenses or punishment and tortures. There have always been individuals who saw that religion was a mere fiction without the smallest kernel of truth. They could and should have taught the less instructed majority to see the senselessness of their faith. They might have hastened the process of progress and anticipated the dawn of science by centuries. Religion closed their lips, and prevented them from rousing the many from their stupid dreams. Religion has employed every means for the destruction of its critics, from the poisoned cup forced on Socrates for trumped-up reasons of State, that were really reasons of religion, to the stake at which Giordano Bruno and Michael Servetus were burned. And yet it has been a factor in intellectual progress! Such an assertion is incomprehensible.

The eulogists of religion gladly turn from the point of view of human development as a whole, in which they are not at home, to record its services in narrower fields. In Ireland and Germany it was the monks who

cleared the primeval forests and turned up the soil with the plough; in France it was they who repeopled the wilderness after the migrations had swept over them. All over Western and Central Europe the monasteries were the first seats of peaceful labour and teaching set up in the wilderness. Down to modern times it has been the clergy who founded and maintained schools and cared for books. All this is true. But the medieval monks cultivated the soil for their own use, or to provide themselves with satisfaction, power, and riches. Religion was their excuse, the claim upon which the possession of property was based; it had no more to do with their civilizing activities than with the productive settlements founded by the emigrants who cross the seas to-day. Thus, the schools founded by the Princes and Orders of the Church served (primarily) the purposes of the Church. Primarily trained a priesthood, and, in the second place, implanted in the minds of the youth of the ruling classes the views and opinions useful to the Church. In these schools the teaching of the formal elements—reading, writing, and grammar—and of the subjects that made up the trivium [1] and the quadrivium of the medieval curriculum, was used as a means of instilling the most irrational stories and dreams, and served, instead of wakening the intellect, to lull it to sleep. There is no doubt that men's minds would have been clearer and more intelligent, their desire for knowledge and their powers of discovery greater, had they then, instead of learning what was taught in the ecclesiastical schools and by the ecclesiastical teachers, grown

[1] The trivium included grammar, dialectic and rhetoric; the quadrivium arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music.

up without any instruction at all, like the Redskins before the whites settled in America.

Religion is said to have subdued the ferocity of man, and taught him gentleness and the love of his fellow-creatures. This claim is as unfounded as that of advancing education and civilization. That all primitive religions demanded human sacrifices can be established with practical certainty from the cultus rites surviving in historical times. At the exodus from Egypt the Jews were enjoined by their religion to destroy the whole population of Canaan root and branch, with their cattle, and their houses, and their goods. Islam bade the faithful wage the holy war on the races within their reach, and offer them a choice between conversion and slaughter. Without pity, often with the most appalling cruelty, did the Christians persecute the Arians, Albigenses, Waldenses, and the other medieval heretics—Jews, and the Protestants of the Netherlands. When the French Huguenots got the upper hand, they did not fail to take a bloody retribution on the Catholics. What trace of the softening influence of religion is there in this long course of butchery and slaughter, extending over thousands of years?

It has provided a basis and sanction for morality—that is true. The religious teacher or believer has no difficulty in answering the question: "What is good, what evil? Why should I do good, and avoid evil? What will happen to me if I do evil, and neglect good?" He answers with unction: "Good is that which is commanded by God or the Gods, and pleasing to them; bad is what they hate and forbid. It is my part to make known the will of God or of the Gods.

Thou must do good in order to win the favour of the Gods, and avoid evil to escape their displeasure. If thou hast sinned, thou wilt be punished on earth or hereafter; if thou art virtuous, the Gods will reward thee now and for evermore." The average man, with no strong passions, has no doubt often been governed by such phrases so long as he believed them. But with the awakening of his critical faculties he turned aside, with a shrug of the shoulders, from the childish promises of religious morality, and acted according to the dictates of his own habits, passions, or views; as, indeed, he had always done, even when he believed, in any case where his own inclinations and desires were stronger than the restraints inspired by the idea of the anger and threats of the Gods. Thus the moral effect of religion was non-existent, not only, as is plain without proof, for the unbeliever, but even for the believer. Crimes were never more frequent or horrible than in those dark epochs of antiquity and the Middle Ages when men believed in the immediate vengeance of the Gods, as displayed in the cases of Niobe the Atreidæ, in the Erinyes and in the eternal torments of Hell. Evil-doers thought nothing of selling their soul to the devil, or of securing God's indulgence by prayers and vows. Robbers and murderers to this day sometimes purchase candles and offerings before committing a crime, pray in church for its success, and give thanks for a lucky conclusion to the supernatural powers to which they imagine it to be due.

As a matter of fact, what is really an effect is always spoken of as a cause. It was not religion that furthered education, softened manners, and gradually formed a

moral sense in man, but education that endeavoured as it progressed to introduce, in many cases with pain and difficulty, some degree of rationality into the crude childishness of the religious legends. The softening of manners gradually removed the cruelty and lust of blood originally associated with religion. Man's moral aspirations affected his visionary faith, and impressed on it something of their own character.

Human development is determined by needs, giving rise to observation, and through it to knowledge. The influence of knowledge gradually moulded intellectual life, and modified the most fixed and deeply-rooted habits. At the same time, as the direct outcome of needs, a form of adaptation is going on alongside of this, but for the most part automatic and subconscious —the life of instinct. The lonely wanderer of primitive times was only attracted to his fellow-men by desire, and to a much less pronounced degree by the conveniences of habit. Morality he neither needed nor possessed. But with society these needs arose. If he wished to live on tolerably peaceful terms with his neighbours, and avoid continual wrangles, violence, and danger of death, or at least of expulsion, he had to learn regard for others, and exercise self-control, even self-sacrifice, in order to make himself pleasing to them. This habit of considering the effect of any action on others was the empirical origin of what was later known as morality. It is therefore an immediate product of society, and the consequence, not of theoretical reflection, but of adaptation to the conditions of a common existence. The idea ever present in man's consciousness, "What will the others say to this?" became the

voice of conscience, the inward reflection of public opinion. The relation between the inward monitor and the external surroundings that it interprets became gradually obscured until conscience, separated from the dim social conception in which it arose, appears finally as a normal constituent of personality.

The most characteristic function of the conscience is to check. Its action is negative; it arrests the impulses. "Do it not!" it cries, and in an undertone, often inaudible: "Society would be against you!" Conscience acts positively with a small minority of people of lively imagination and delicate sensibilities; with them it incites as well as checking, commands as well as forbidding. Instead of only saying "Do it not!" it says, "Do it!" It grows out of a mere fear of wounding our companions into an active desire to win them over, and fill them with joy, love, and wonder. Cold, cautious consideration for others becomes a warm and active love, an altruism whose psychic root is the capacity to imagine the sufferings of another, and suffer personally from a vivid picture of distress. Altruism, therefore, is protection against actual pain; conscientiousness the idea of possible discomfort, and a protection against potential pain. Only in the few does the development of morality thus proceed from the negative to the positive stage. In most it is negative at best; in many it is distorted or entirely wanting. Persons suffering from hypertrophy of the ego, or a sense of power which is developed to excess, have no consideration for others. They consider themselves so vastly superior that the hate or enmity of others is a matter of indifference. On persons of violent impulses and weak mentality the

idea that they will rouse others against them has absolutely no effect in restraining them from actions that must bring them into collision. Such men commit crimes from violence or weakness. But whether you take the criminal, the man who keeps on the right side of every social usage, or the warm-hearted altruist, the things he does and the things he leaves undone are the outcome of a perpetual balancing of psychic states, of checks against impulses, a series of duels between organic instincts and the idea of society. Convenient labour-saving formulæ have been invented for this idea. Regard for neighbours is expressed in the ten tables of Moses, in the Commandments of Manu, later, in the legal codes. A Divine origin has been assigned to the most ancient formulæ, as to everything remote and immemorial in origin, whether it be an invention or a form of social institution. Morality, which arose out of society, was referred to the commandment of God. To men's superstitious minds, the fact that their actions were seen by their neighbours suggested that they were watched over by supernatural powers.

It is possible, but not certain, that moral checks may have been strengthened by the absorption of mystical ideas, and the wholesome fear of the gendarme by a belief in its supernatural origin. Certain, however, it is not. The state of morality in the times when faith was most fervent and superstition most rampant makes it very doubtful. Anyhow, morality neither needs nor is strengthened by a religious basis. It remains the same when stripped of all supersensual attributes. It arose from the necessities of that social life of which it is the condition, and it will last so long as men live in

societies. Faith will never restrain criminal natures from ill-doing; society has always had to protect itself against them by force, and will always have to do so, whether they believe or no. What is done and what is left undone by the average man of negative morality is determined, quite apart from the question of his belief or unbelief, by considerations of public opinion, law, and custom. And the positive morality of the altruistic minority springs from pity, from a heightened sensibility, not from the dogmatic precepts that must be, for them, even were their own organization different from what it is, but a dead letter. Religion has never had any influence on the origin and development of morals any more than on their active exercise. It has never done anything more than incorporate in its system the principles arrived at by morality through the operation of the forces that brought it into being, and strengthen that system by expressing these principles in the form of dogmas.

Religion no doubt has brought comfort to many. That this is so is not, however, at all to its credit. The practical utility of untruth is a cynical defence that all liars bring forward. No doubt the assurance of immortality robs the idea of death of its terrors. The promise of future reunion helps the mother to bear the loss of her child; the thought that eternal justice will be dealt out to good and evil deeds pours balsam in the wounds of the weak, down-trodden, and ill-used who have succumbed before the pride of the mighty. But the means by which these tortured spirits are soothed are unhealthy and immoral in the extreme—invented tales and arbitrary assertions which cannot stand a

moment's critical examination. The merit that belongs to the consolation of religion must be granted to every superstition—the amulet that averts the evil eye, spells, the interpretation of cards and dreams, the raising of spirits. All this hocus-pocus has lightened dark hours for millions who believed in it, given them confidence and self-reliance, lifted heavy burdens from their souls, and reconciled them to the hardness of their lot. Moreover, physical sedatives, like opium, morphia, and alcohol, must be assigned an equal value with religion. They, too, console; they, too, bring temporary oblivion of care and suffering; they, too, give an artificial sense of pleasure. And if it be at the price of health, the same holds true of religion when it takes the form of mortification of the flesh and self-inflicted tortures. The ancients, recognizing this, regarded intoxication as a blessing for which they rendered peculiar thanks to the Gods.[1]

Not one of the services that religion claims to have rendered to man can be substantiated. It has retarded, not advanced, civilization. It has injured knowledge. It has had no share in the softening of manners. It did not create morality; it has appropriated without elevating it. Its powers of consolation are confined to individuals in whom the sense of actuality is deadened or

[1] Frédéric de Rougemont, "Les deux cités: la philosophie de l'histoire aux différents âges de l'humanité," Paris, 1878, vol. i., p. 187: "Dionysius comforts mortals in all their sorrows. The son of Semele puts an end to the profound misery of humanity (Penthos) by giving men knowledge of his vine. There was a time when the Greeks believed that God himself had given them wine that they might forget their pain. They looked upon intoxication as a sacred, divine ecstasy."

undeveloped. Everywhere it is but an epiphenomenon of that universal development upon which it has had either no effect or a detrimental one. Development goes on as the outcome of increasing knowledge and more delicate adaptation to the conditions imposed upon human existence by nature and society, and religion, with its ideas, dogmas, systems, and cults, follows in its train. Religion never voluntarily changes its doctrines. It only does so when those who believe threaten to desert it, because it is plainly contradicted by common knowledge. Thus religion, despite its resistance, is slowly driven on by the general course of intellectual development, which it in vain endeavours to arrest.

Since man became capable of abstract thought he has been tormented by the riddle of eternity. He has always found the thought of death, the complete destruction of his personality, intolerable. He has always been crushed by the feeling of his nothingness in the midst of the vastness of the universe, his helplessness in face of the powers of nature, which go on their way without regarding him or troubling about him at all. The invention of religion was the simplest and least troublesome way of providing an answer to the questions that tortured him, protection against death, a less humiliating position in the universe, a support against the cruelty of nature, a link with its terrifying powers. The need which gave birth to religion still exists, and will exist, in all probability, as long as men think and feel. But it cannot always be satisfied with fables and visions. So much is certain, however difficult it be as yet to form any clear idea of any other means by which

the growing intelligence of average humanity, the scales once fallen from its eyes, can satisfy the instinct of self-preservation in its twofold aspect—the desire for knowledge and the fear of death. An attempt to do so will, however, be made in a following chapter.

CHAPTER VII

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL PREMISES OF HISTORY

POPULAR charts of the sky, that combine bodies immeasurably distant and entirely unconnected with each other in a single star, under a single name, may be picturesque; they do not advance the knowledge of the universe or of the laws of astronomy. In the same way the spectacle of human existence on the earth is not illuminated by projecting into it an arbitrary system of phantoms, and persuading oneself that they represent the life of the species, not the reflection of one's own imagination. The dreams of a deductive philosophy of history do not forward our knowledge of events by one hair's-breadth. To forget that the words used, "humanity," "society," "nation," are but convenient ways of expressing abstract conceptions and vague generalizations of a comprehensive kind, is to get out of touch with reality, and prevent oneself from seeing or comprehending it, because to do thus is to set up between it and oneself an anthropomorphic image of one's own creation—a man of straw. The only reality is the individual who lives, acts, and suffers. In him alone the events of history have an existence, even the mass movements in which a bird's-eye view cannot distinguish individual action or bearing. He plays all the parts in the drama of history, from the hero to the walking gentleman. An accurate idea of the inner

structure of the historical life of mankind as a whole can only be obtained by a study of individual characteristics, of thought and reactions—in a word, of individual biology and psychology.[1] Medicine could really know nothing of sickness as long as the abstract concept, sickness—in which a mass of concrete phenomena and conscious states was included—was regarded as a material thing, although it might conceal its ignorance by juggling with all sorts of portentous and unmeaning words like "genius morbi," "dyscrasia," etc. Real insight was first acquired when the cell, the primary constituent of the organism, was recognized as the seat of the life-process, and its normal course and deviations from that norm studied there. Individual psychology is to history what the pathology of the cell is to medicine. Even this is an excessive concession to the analogic habit of thought; the independence of the individual within the people and within humanity is far greater than of the cell within the organism. Goethe's phrase expresses the right method:

> "Wouldst draw strength from the whole?
> See in smallest part the perfect soul."

All individual members of the species have certain fundamental characteristics. Feeling, thought, will, and

[1] Paul Lacombe, "De l'histoire considérée comme science," Paris, 1894, p. 52: "The primitive causes of history are the persistent motives of man and the permanent habits of his mind." Joh. Fr. Herbart, "Collected Works" (edited by G. Hartenstein), *passim* (vol. v., pp. 160 *et seq.;* vol. viii., pp. 101 *et seq.*, etc.), shows that the analysis of the life of the individual soul is the basis of historical science. Cousin says concisely: "The science of history is really psychological." Fontana and Ferguson, among others, are of the same opinion.

action proceed in the same manner in almost all individuals—up to a certain point in all without exception. This facilitates the study of human psychology by simplifying its objects, but does not remove the necessity of studying them in the individual. He may be selected at will from the crowd, but he must be a concrete individual, not an abstraction. Positive results acquired from a particular living being may be cautiously generalized, without any great danger of their being inapplicable to the species as a whole. On the other hand, if the attention be diverted from the individual, and cast down from some remote height upon the seething mass in which personal physiognomies are no longer distinguishable, the only portrait of an individual that could be drawn from such an impressionist view, if I may put it so, would be a fancy composition based on preconceived ideas—an ideal being that might represent a wish, but would certainly not correspond to any human being of flesh and blood. It is obvious that the historian's humanity, composed of such beings, must be wholly unreal.

Man shares with all other living things the instinct of self-preservation. This makes it necessary and possible for him to adapt himself, actively or passively, to given conditions of existence—passively by organic resistance to injurious circumstances, actively by trying to escape from them or to alter them and render them favourable. Passive adaptation came first. It is a chemical and mechanical process. It is the work of the vegetative organs. If they refuse, the individual perishes. Every individual that survives proves, by his very existence, that he has been able to maintain

himself against all the forces incessantly at work for his destruction. He is heir to all the capacities, forms, and inward arrangements acquired by a series of ancestors in the truceless struggle for existence. Proof of the magnitude of the organic effort involved even in passive adaptation, and of the profound changes in the organism that it can produce, is afforded by the waxen covering of the acid-proof bacilli; the arrangements possessed by Alpine plants to protect them against cold and want of water, by desert plants against drought; the way in which fish, whose watery home is liable to be periodically dried up, breathe alternatively through lungs or gills; and the hibernation of those warm-blooded animals who have regularly to go for months without food. This great work, productive of the most decisive consequences, was proceeding throughout the organs and tissues of the living body before the smallest ray of common consciousness arose. After the development of that consciousness it ceased, and plays no further part.

Active adaptation appeared much later than passive. Instead of being a purely biochemical, biomechanical function, the independent response of cells, tissues, organs to external stimuli, it is a unified co-operation of all the organs and the whole system in carrying out a plan developed in the consciousness, and present to it as an idea, before it can be translated into act by nerves and muscles. This higher, more developed, and indirect form of adaptation premises the existence of consciousness, able, by means of its fundamental attribute, memory, to work out ideas, to arrange them in order, to associate them with other subconscious ideas re-

sembling or related to them in space and time, or as belonging to the same object, and to draw conclusions and form judgments from them. A description of psychology would be out of place here. It must suffice to recall its main points.

Consciousness is the first fact of psychology. It is a datum that cannot be explained. It perceives the impressions conveyed to it by the sensory nerves. From these perceptions it composes an image of the causes of these impressions of the sensory nerves, as far as they are known by experience and constant examination or can be guessed from analogy, and this image is an idea.

By the juxtaposition and combination of ideas the consciousness acquires a view of the conditions or events of the external world, whether present, past, or future. This view is a judgment. The exactitude with which the ideas of which the judgment is composed correspond to the perceptions, and the delicacy with which the perceptions repeat the sense impressions, determines the accuracy of the judgment, the degree of definiteness and truth with which it reflects an actual or potential reality —a condition or process that is, was, or under certain hypotheses could be.

When the judgment includes ideas that personally affect the judge, in which he is himself actively or passively concerned, these ideas arouse more or less powerful feelings, and set up certain muscular movements, or at least, foreshadow them, that is to say, they rouse the activity of the will. Will is a short and conveniently simple description of a very complicated psychic process, whose main features are as follows: Some external sense stimulus—a perception of some

kind, or an inner organic need—hunger, thirst, desire, fatigue, or discomfort—calls ideas into consciousness. If the idea stands alone, or is from the first of such intensity that no others can form themselves beside it, it excites the motor centres, the muscles become active, and the organism carries out an act which, under the given conditions, corresponds to the stimulus or satisfies the need—that is, a serviceable act. Muscular activity when accompanied by no idea is reflex. If, on the contrary, consciousness has previous knowledge of the muscular act, forms an image of it and of its purpose before it is realized, it feels it to be volitional—an act of will. But in most cases the idea either does not stand alone, or does not prevail immediately on its appearance. Several ideas present themselves at once, and each tries to crowd out and suppress the other, to occupy consciousness and initiate muscular movement by itself. In the contest victory rests with the idea supported by the strongest organic impulses, desires, and inclinations, by the expectation of the most alluring pleasure and the apprehension of the most dreaded pains. It drives the others from the field, excites the motor centres, and causes appropriate actions. In such a case the consciousness is sensible of a psychic effort, a contest of will, and a victory of will over resistance. Will is then, in the last resort, the liberation of co-ordinated, purposive, muscular movements by the influence of an idea, or the prevention of such an influence by means of an opposing idea, which suppresses it—that is, by an inhibition or check.

One condition of the regular operation of the consciousness is attention—that is, such an adjustment of

the psychic apparatus that all the sense impressions perceived, and all the ideas brought up from the subconsciousness, serve the one end of giving the greatest possible intensity to the particular complex of ideas at that moment dominating the consciousness, and secure the duration of that complex by ignoring—that is, passively resisting—all foreign conceptions, ideas, and recollections. But for attention consciousness would be given up to inconsequence and reverie; ideas would never be interpreted into clear, sharply-outlined images, and could not maintain themselves or issue in systematic movements—that is, in acts of will.

Attention may be natural or artificial. It is natural when the psychic apparatus is adjusted in immediate response to some organic impulse. Under the impulse of its desire for prey the cat watches the mouse-hole. All its senses are concentrated on its purpose. When it sees the unsuspecting mouse venturing forth, it is blind to all else. Attention is artificial when the psychic apparatus is not adjusted to an immediate organic need, but to an idea of some satisfaction desired or pain to be avoided, of other than a directly organic kind. In spite of his repugnance, the schoolboy forces himself to learn grammatical rules by heart, and suppresses the ideas of pleasant loafing, because the idea of the unpleasantness of failing in his examination so regulates his psychic adjustment that, for the moment, the grammatical rules have sole possession of his consciousness. The man of science, whose gaze is riveted on his microscope and the images which it reveals, has his senses and his consciousness preserved from distraction from the object of his observation directly through his scien-

tific curiosity, and indirectly through the idea of the pleasure of acquiring new knowledge.

A diseased form of attention is mono-ideism, when the consciousness is permanently possessed by one exclusive idea, which all perceptions and associations only serve to feed and strengthen. When other ideas succeed in entering the consciousness, without driving this central idea out, so that the consciousness is perceiving sense impressions, turning them into ideas, then forming judgments, and so acts of will, while all the time the original idea remains like a foreign body, unmoved in the midst of the burning tide of ideas that stream continually through the consciousness, the state is described as obsession. But if the attention of the consciousness, instead of being open to perceptions conveyed to it by the sensory nerves, is claimed by inner organic processes accompanied by sensations of intense pleasure, then the consciousness becomes inaccessible to impressions from the outer world, all its ideas are referred only to sensations of pleasure, and it falls into a state known as ecstasy.

When the attention is thoroughly aroused, the consciousness recognizes the ideas that have by experience been proved to be incompatible, and avoids uniting ideas that are mutually exclusive to form one judgment. It is sensible of the absurdity of the judgment, "Angels are beings consisting of winged human heads," because it knows from experience that, since the human head has a mouth connected with a windpipe and digestive canal, a mouth without this canal leading to lungs and stomach has neither meaning nor purpose, while no head could live without breath, circulation, or nourishment. When

attention flags, and permits vague ideas to appear in the consciousness, judgments may arise composed of mutually exclusive parts, and therefore absurd—opposed, that is, to the truth as known to human experience. The same result is brought about, even though the attention does not flag, when the consciousness unites in one judgment, and places in one category, ideas that have been acquired by personal experience and ideas that, having been taken over ready-made from the consciousness of others, have not been acquired by experience or controlled by the senses, and are, as a matter of fact, false.

The means by which ideas are conveyed ready-made from one consciousness to another is language. Unless the ideas combine parts that have been proved by experience to be mutually exclusive, their absurdity will not appear. Language can transmit false ones as readily as true without, indeed, perceiving any difference between them, unless each individual idea thus transmitted be tested by the senses and then by experience. This is in many cases almost, if not wholly, impossible —for example, in the case of assertions about events that happened at some remote time or place. Language is, therefore, with laxity of attention, the source of false conclusions. Moreover, the majority of men never do translate spoken or written images into ideas. They remain in the consciousness mere sounds or signs, which are either repeated or reproduced from time to time, after the fashion of parrots or monkeys, without any interpretation at all, or else interpreted in a manner that removes them more or less from the ideas which they must originally have symbolized. Thus, men who

wish to pass as learned, and even as sensible—it is not necessarily the same thing—have solemnly delivered themselves, as if they were uttering some profundity, of such nonsense as Hegel's, "The Roman Empire is finitude raised to infinitude," or his, "The sun is the thesis, the satellite and comet the antithesis, the planet the synthesis"; or the description by the mystical Father Boscowitch [1] of "the material point that possesses mass without extension." The spoken and the written word, which should transmit ideas, produce as a rule nothing but psittacism and pithecism.

There is one activity of the consciousness in which ideas exist side by side in the order in which they are called up by association from the subconsciousness, and are combined in judgments even when obviously mutually exclusive. This occurs in dreams, which unite ideas in accordance with their associations in time and space and their emotional resemblances, without any sense of the unreality and absurdity of the images and judgments thus formed. Fantasy, though a waking state, summons up and combines ideas by the same unrestrained method of mechanical association found in dreams. These ideas, being ultimately recollections—reflections, therefore, of some real experience—are combined in a manner that is wholly unreal. The difference between dream and fantasy is that in the dream one single bodily feeling or one emotion that dominates the organism calls the ideas forth and combines them, whereas fantasy is not determined by physical feelings—except in the case of the sick, where they cause delirium

[1] Quoted by J. Paul Milliet, "La Dynamics et les trois âmes," Paris, 1908, p. 2.

—but by organic emotion combined with conscious thought, that excludes any glaringly contradictory ideas, and forms unreal judgments for the sake of their charm, while perfectly aware of their unreality.

All processes of the brain and nervous system can be quicker and slower, fainter or more powerful. These differences of rhythm and intensity determine the differences of individual temperament. The contest between ideas in the consciousness that ends in the subjugation of the one and decided mastery of the other may go on with more or less energy. The greater the energy with which ideas appear and assert themselves and drive other aggressive ideas out, the keener and more sustained is the attention, the firmer is the will. The energy with which ideas struggle for existence in the consciousness is the measure of character. Character and temperament are inborn characteristics, like stature, or the colour of eyes, hair, and skin. They may possibly be increased by practice; they can certainly be weakened and even destroyed by artificial means, by alcoholic and other poisons, and deficient resistance to the desire for pleasure.

All effort of brain and nerves, from the first phase to the last, from differentiation of sense impressions, perception, idea, judgment, down to the act of will, has one single purpose—the adaptation of the organism to its environment, the knowledge and utilization for its own advantage of the conditions under which it has to maintain its existence, its protection and defence against the harms and dangers threatening it. The necessities of self-preservation have caused the differentiation of the general sensibility of the body into various senses, and

the rise and development of specific sense organs. They have fused the exceedingly limited consciousness probably inherent in every cell, every molecule of living matter, into a common organic consciousness, and then developed and refined this consciousness, enriched it by the power of associating ideas, taught it attention, and developed an inhibitory system, which can insure the permanence of any conscious state, defend it against distraction, suppress reflex action, and co-ordinate volitions.

The more distinct and numerous the sense impressions; the clearer the ideas and the fuller their reflection in the consciousness of the states and modifications of the external world; the more numerous and accurate the recollections that they summon from the subconsciousness; the more readily association completes the immediate perceptions and interprets to the consciousness the order, succession, and connection of external phenomena, even where they are not wholly concrete; the greater proportionate measure of reality contained by judgments, and the acts of will, that result from the influence of the judgment on the inhibitions and motor impulses, the closer the correspondence with the interest of the organism whether momentary or permanent, and the better in proportion are its prospects of maintaining itself successfully in the struggle for existence. In a word, attention, knowledge, will, are all alike forms of the struggle for existence. Every reaction, conscious or unconscious, of the organism to the phenomenal world is a form of adaptation, and the driving and creative force behind the efforts and the development of mind is the instinct of self-preservation.

Men are by nature unequal, as even Rousseau[1] admits, although with singular logic he deduces from their natural inequality the possibility—nay, the necessity—of moral and political equality. Men are unequal in stature, skull formation, and colour; they are no less unequal in temperament and character. The proximate causes of this inequality are mainly heredity, by which the type is determined, and to a lesser degree unfavourable circumstances, which cause a morbid failure to attain the full development of the type. The inequality resulting from unfavourable circumstances can be easily removed by an amelioration in these conditions. The extent to which inequality resulting from heredity can be influenced is as yet unknown; unknown, too, are the remote causes of the appearance of different human types. We do not know whether they represent sports of a species originally single, or are the results of originally different, although closely related, prehuman animal species; whether they can be modified and gradually transformed into one another by external influences, or remain fixed so long as they are bred in, and change only when breeds are crossed. One thing is certain. As men are tall and short, dolicho- and brachycephalic, strong and weak in muscular, so there are men who think slowly and men who think rapidly;

[1] J. J. Rousseau, "Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes": "I conceive . . . two kinds of inequality: one which I call natural or physical, because it is established by nature, and consists in the difference of age, health, bodily strength, and mental and spiritual qualities; another, which may be called moral or political inequality, because it depends upon a sort of convention, and has been established, or at least authorized, by the consent of men."

men in whom attention is fugitive, and men in whom it is sustained; men whose character is vacillating, and men who are firm; men in whom will is slack, and men in whom it is powerful. These characteristics are indubitably the expression of the chemical composition of the living protoplasm of the cell, which varies between man and man, species and species.

Observation establishes the existence in man of certain qualities which, in their main outlines, apart from minor details, are reproduced with sufficient frequency to allow a line to be drawn marking the average level of development, above which only a small minority rise at all, and only exceptional cases by any considerable extent. Let us select from the crowd any individual at random, a man who is in no sense outstanding, neither above nor beneath the normal level, and examine him as we should an average specimen of any other species of which we wished to form an idea. This man, whom I should like, in spite of the ill-repute into which the word has fallen through incautious use, to call normal, is in temperament and character the outcome of natural and inherited tendencies. The content of his consciousness is largely the product of education, of which the aims and methods have been determined by society and the State. Primitive man's whole knowledge of the world must have rested on his own perception and observation, however limited that may have been: it was based upon personal experience, went back to actual impressions, and was transformed by him to an inner vision. In a state of civilization the normal man owes the smallest part of his ideas and judgments to the impressions made by his own senses, and the mode in

which they are developed by his own thought. For the greater part they come to him, as written and spoken symbols through the writing and speech of others, and remain throughout his life mere sounds and signs, that are either associated with no view at all, or with one quite at variance with reality. A stream of words and combinations pours in upon him from language, intercourse, school, newspapers, and books, and some of them remain in his memory as formulæ. If he is provided with a good supply of such formulæ, and can produce one on any occasion that requires it, he passes in his own estimation and that of his fellows as a cultivated man. But his repetition of formulæ is mere psittacism, and his word-knowledge has nothing to do with real knowledge. His consciousness contains a tiny kernel of experience shrouded as often as not in a vast fog of words.

Observation sharpens the sense of reality, and accustoms the consciousness to examine its ideas and criticize the elements of perception of which they are composed. It at once perceives the incompatibility between ideas combined in a judgment, and dismisses as absurd one composed of incompatible or mutually exclusive ideas.

But, on the contrary, when the consciousness, instead of forming judgments from its own sense perceptions, accepts them ready-made in verbal form from other men, there is nothing to warn it of their meaninglessness. Words can be joined together to form a sentence, even if they express the impossible, and unless the written or spoken symbol is translated into an idea, the impossibility escapes the consciousness. Now, the ordinary man seldom translates his words into ideas,

or only very partially. One repeats a judgment from another, parrot-wise, a judgment to which no thought is attached. He becomes so much accustomed to using abstractions, whose content at the best is casual and arbitrary, that his consciousness ceases to mirror the actual world at all. The normal man neither observes nor examines. He repeats mechanically what he has heard said. He is not critical: he is credulous.

The capacity for attention is, as a rule, weakly developed. Even the natural attention, aroused and maintained by some immediate organic interest, some impulse, desire, or passion, soon wearies, and the artificial attention that lacks any such stimulus is still earlier exhausted. Consciousness in the normal man is a mere corridor, through which streams a rapid tide of ideas, seldom pausing to place themselves so that they stand out distinctly, maintain their hold, or calls up across the threshold of consciousness the recollections whose association might complete them. The result of insufficient attention is that the immediate perceptions remain isolated and fragmentary. Mere word-images, that need have no real content at all, become combined with sense perceptions to form ideas. False judgments are thus formed, which are compelled by the poverty and incompleteness of their associations to confine themselves to what is immediately given, without being able to trace its proximate and ultimate causes or its immediate and remote effects. Thus, the normal man can see no further into the connection of phenomena than their concrete and temporal aspect, while he is unable to anticipate the future, even in so far as it is conditioned by the present. His knowledge is strictly limited.

His petty and distorted picture of the world is almost entirely out of touch with reality, because it is composed to a very small extent of perceptions, and to a much larger one of word-images, fantastically interpreted, and of the products of a roving imagination. His adaptation, for which consciousness exists, is extremely defective. It leaves him defenceless against dangers which he does not notice or whose cause he cannot understand, poor in the face of uncomprehended possibilities which might enrich his life could he but grasp them.

Consciousness strives, after the measure of its capacity, to lighten the heavy task of adaptation. The method at its disposal is habit. Recurring perceptions, however casually or incompletely repeated, will start the whole train of mental operations which was initiated when they were first attentively and completely observed. Without any fresh effort of thought or will, they provoke the corresponding ideas, judgments, and acts. All these activities are so organized in the brain that one calls up the other, and the organism responds, without fatigue, uncertainty, or hesitation, to the existing stimulus with the appropriate reaction. When the habitual responses of consciousness to impression are fully organized, the behaviour of the individual becomes instinctive, and his actions automatic. They do not, indeed, take place entirely without activity on the part of the consciousness, but it is wholly freed from anything painful in the effort of thought, judgment, or will.

It has been established by European observers that negro children possess a lively comprehension and quick

intelligence, and do not, when at school, fall behind whites of the same age. This apparent equality of endowment lasts up to a certain age, generally contemporaneous with puberty. Then a sort of numbness supervenes. The little blacks can no longer follow the instruction. They become incapable of receiving new ideas, and fail, even if they have the will and make the effort, to rise above the stage at which they have arrived. This phenomenon has only been found among negroes, because it has only been looked for there. Its application is, however, not confined to the black race, but extends to the whole human species, without distinction of colour. The intellectual development of the average man is not co-extensive with his life. It soon ceases, and as a rule, as in the case of negro children, with sexual adolescence.

Youthful man is liberally endowed with thirst for knowledge or curiosity. New impressions give him pleasure, and he seeks for them. He readily responds to stimuli, assimilates thoughts, is seldom obstinately fixed in his ideas, soon makes himself at home wherever he may be, and cleverly accommodates himself to change. However, even at this stage of youthful pliability he finds it more agreeable, because less troublesome, to imitate foreign copies than to invent rules for himself, to repeat what he has been told than to win personal knowledge by experience. But imitation comes easily and readily to him. As he grows older the moment comes, earlier to some, later to others, when the mind loses its easy pliability, and the consciousness, so to speak, congeals to some extent. The desire for knowledge gives place to dulness. Man avoids any

new experiences that penetrate below the surface. His observation becomes cursory and superficial. He disregards everything unusual; he neither notices nor heeds it unless it is painfully forced upon his attention. He is set against new methods of thought; he dislikes a strange circle in which he has to watch the lie of the land and find his own way about. He is only happy when following the well-worn path of every day, along which he could go in his sleep, or with his eyes shut, so well does he know it and the goal to which it leads. He cannot be brought to change his mind. He sticks to his ideas, even when they have been proved to be errors. He struggles even against imitation, if the copy be new. He will only repeat himself. He adapts himself to changed conditions of life slowly and incompletely, if at all. He is aware that his organization is no longer equal to the task of dissolving the stereotyped combinations in his brain and forming new associations, and enters upon it very timidly. The normal man's hatred for anything new, what Lombroso calls his misoneism, is a protective instinct, based upon biological reasons. It is a form of a protection against harm. The man whose brain is petrified is right in dreading anything new. It makes demands which he could not meet. He prefers the often incredible misery or even acute suffering to which he is accustomed to the effort involved in freeing himself from a habit and building up the new disposition that promises to relieve or rid him of his pain.

Such is the normal man. His will is of moderate force and endurance, and therefore his attention is soon fatigued, and cannot remain long at its full on one point.

His perceptions in consequence are superficial and fragmentary. He completes them arbitrarily by the addition of recollections, more or less suitable, and ideas, more or less analogous. The content of his consciousness is meagre, and includes a little reality, a good deal of illusion, and a number of purely verbal symbols that possess for him no real meaning. His thought is not energetic enough to carry to its logical conclusion, its appropriate judgment, knowledge, or action any train of ideas that is of importance to him at a given moment, or assure it, when so employed, the sole possession of consciousness by keeping away the perpetual stream of ideas aroused by changing sense impressions, bodily sensations, and accidental associations. Rather he prefers to saunter along the easy path of semi-conscious reverie, that needs no concentration and attention, no effort of any kind, and leads to no clearness of view, no knowledge, no serviceable expression of will. He cannot comprehend the connection of phenomena, or trace even a few stages in their near and remote causes and their necessary effects. Within his own consciousness he cannot differentiate a reflection of the truth from an addition of the imagination. He is happy only when following a routine, and shrinks instinctively from the unknown, with its demands on attention, observation, rational interpretation, and personal judgment, action, and resolution. Although the species has existed for millions of years, man's power of adaptation is but very moderately developed, and in the course of the struggle to maintain himself against unfriendly nature he has done no more than acquire a few useful aptitudes, which he hastens to employ, with the least pos-

sible exertion, by organizing them as habits. The conditions of his life demand that he should be ever on the war-path against nature, but he evades the encounter whenever he can by following a routine which consists in a dubious peace or at least an armistice with his hostile environment.

Above this average level there rises a minority more highly developed and more efficient. The superior man has a more perfect brain. The biochemical processes of its cell plasm are more energetic, and the brain itself retains plasticity much longer, and in exceptional cases even unto extreme old age. The consequences of these anatomical and physiological premises are momentous. The temperament of the superior man is vital, his character is firm. His feelings are strong, and his will powerful and sustained. He acts, therefore, with decision and energy. His attention is not easily fatigued. No distractions avail to divert it. He is thus a keen observer of the aspects of reality that are of importance for himself. His inhibitions are swift and sure, and his instincts completely subject to his will. His will, guided by his judgment, restrains automatism within narrow bounds, or suppresses it altogether. Instead of allowing himself to be enslaved to the convenience of habit, he adapts himself to every modification of his environment. His reactions are not mechanical. Every change elicits a new, appropriate response. Perhaps his most striking peculiarity, and the real cause of his superiority to the average man, is the feeling for the concrete which is the result of his faculty of sustained and concentrated attention.

I must dwell for a little on this point. We are accus-

tomed to regard the power of abstraction as the peculiar glory of human thought, which we conceive to be superior to that of animals, limited as it is to the concrete, and incapable of general concepts. This is, however, probably an error in which philosophy has for centuries been involved, and from which we should have the courage to free ourselves. Abstraction is, of all mental processes, the most delicate and uncertain. In reality, phenomena follow one another in space and time, and no two are ever identical. Our perception becomes accustomed to neglect the less striking differences between them, and to dwell on the striking points of resemblance; so gradually, we begin to regard the resemblances as essential, and the differences as accessory, and thus, on this basis of resemblance, we combine all individual concrete phenomena in a single idea. This synthetic idea is an abstraction. It is arrived at in the same way as the composite photography of Galton and Spencer, and has the same significance. It is well known that Galton got his pictures by placing before the photographic lens a number of photographs of equal size, one after another, under the same conditions as to exposure, distance, and light. The sensitive plate took an equal impression of each. Features common to some or all the photographs combined in the negative, and came out strongly. Those which appeared more rarely or only once came less prominently or not at all. The finished portrait is the sum of the individual likenesses. It has a distant resemblance to them all without being like any. It is an ideal scheme of all the photographs that composed it, but in no sense an aspect of the real. Galton promised himself weighty

results from his method. It could not produce them, for it permits the synthesis of all possible phenomena possessing any feature in common, without stipulating that this feature should be essential to any. A synthesis uniting components thus arbitrarily selected is a piece of foolery that may be amusing, but tells us nothing worth knowing about the component parts.

In the same way, abstraction unites certain individual features belonging to a series of concrete phenomena—features that need only be the most obvious, not the most important. Abstraction thus arises from an unconscious selection from among the elements of any phenomenon, by retaining this and neglecting that. It is an interpretation: it involves a preconceived opinion about the phenomenon, a judgment as to what is and what is not important. It imposes upon perception subjective requirements that must twist and mutilate it, and are an incessant source of errors.

Biologically, abstract thought is necessary to spare the brain much tedious labour, and permit it to acquire from isolated perceptions a connected image of the world possessing rational significance. But this advantage is obtained at the cost of grave disadvantages. Abstract thought is certainly a pleasing relief from the concentrated attention involved in the effort to observe and comprehend reality, but it loses in reliability what it gains in ease. It departs too easily from the concrete phenomenon, which alone possesses objective truth, and creates subjective illusion in the consciousness instead of knowledge. The more concrete a man's thought, the greater his mastery of reality. Some of the most important discoveries have been due to that sustained

attention to the minute differences of similar phenomena with which abstraction thinks to dispense. By such means Ramsay found argon, neon, xenon, and helium in air; Curie and his wife extracted radium from uranium; and Javillier [1] proved that one unit of zinc, of which the significance in plant life was entirely unknown, will produce a hundred thousand times its own weight in the *Aspergillus niger*.

The distrust with which abstract reasoning should be regarded applies still more strongly to reasoning by analogy or intuition. Each of these methods is a source of ideas and judgments in the consciousness which it takes for knowledge. They are easy, comfortable methods, but they lead too often to pathless quagmires of error and delusion. Analogies, like intuitions, contain a small kernel of usefulness. When there is a partial resemblance between two phenomena, it is natural to refer this resemblance to some cause which the two are supposed to have in common, and to assume the existence of a connection between them closer than the visible resemblance itself. In this way the known may be the key to the unknown, and analogy may acquire a heuristic value. But the greatest care must be taken in the use of analogies. It must always be remembered that the dissimilarities of the phenomena have their causes as well as the similarities; that the difference between them and the fact that they are not related is proved as surely by the one set of characteristics as relationship can be by the other; and that it is a logical error to identify phenomena on the ground of

[1] Javillier, "Recherches sur la présence et le rôle du zinc chez les plantes," Paris, 1908.

certain resemblances, and overlook the simultaneous existence of their differences. Moreover, it is in all cases necessary to establish epistemologically that the resemblance itself is not a mere deceptive appearance, a subjective arrangement, amplification, and interpretation of phenomena based upon our habit of thought, and proceeding from inaccurate observation. If two phenomena appear to us to be similar because our observation has in each case been incorrect, or because in each case we have introduced, from our own consciousness, a subjective trait foreign to both, which is the sole cause of their apparent similarity, we start from an error; and we arrive at an error if we draw any inference from one phenomenon to the other which is based upon a resemblance which has no objective existence. Intuition, too, can serve as a guide; for, after all, the sole phenomenon in the world that is seen from within is our own consciousness. We surprise movements in it that we can perceive nowhere else, and which must remain eternally unknown to us everywhere else. Could we, then, but connect the movements detected in our consciousness with conditions and processes outside ourselves, we might obtain a knowledge of them such as could be got in no other way. The great danger is that it is seldom possible to examine the relation between our intuitions, the strictly subjective movements of our consciousness, and any objective process in the world, and therefore we can never know with certainty the objective worth of our subjective intuitions.

The superior man is marked by realism. He hardly knows the flattering delight of day-dreams. His fancy

does not soar into cloudy regions, into a world remote from space and time. His thought does not occupy itself with any phantasmagoria of words, or with abstractions which, being devoid of any concrete content, can float aloft above the real. No feature of the phenomenon appears unworthy of his attention; he lets none escape him; he tries to understand or perceive them all. He would rather admit the existence of gaps in his knowledge than hide them by meaningless words or arbitrary fancies. With careful assurance he traces the concrete event back to its causes, and thence infers the effects to which he can thus advantageously adapt himself in advance. Thus he faces nature like a skilful duellist who knows his opponent's methods of fence, foresees and easily parries his strokes; and in the battle of life he is as superior to the average man, whose thinking is made up of abstraction and words without ideas, as an armed man with the use of his eyes is to an unarmed man who is blind.

It is, of course, understood that the species does not really consist of two sharply distinguished races—the average man, whose attention wanders, and the superior man, in whom it is sustained. Between these two there are innumerable transition stages, and the differences only become striking when we take representatives standing at the farther ends of the scale. The superior man rises high above the average in proportion as his attention, the first manifestation of the inherent energy of his will, is concentrated and sustained, his consciousness filled by concrete images, his judgment in close touch with reality: as he succeeds, on the one hand, in

tracing phenomena back to their causes and in foreseeing their effects, and, on the other, in obtaining a relatively complete comprehension of the determining factors in their development and mutual interaction—in proportion as, instead of stereotyping his associations into fixed habits, he retains that capacity of silent adaptation to all the modifications of the external world which carries him on to ever new resolves, and to the ever more forcible realization in action.

These characteristics mark out the superior man as master. He has what Hobbes calls "the natural mastery of force—that is, of certain individuals, impelled to command by the constitution of their brain."

He cannot refuse the part, even if he would; it is imposed upon him. He could only escape it if he lived, like Robinson Crusoe or Timon of Athens, in isolation, solitary and remote from his fellow-men, or among individuals of his own type with equal natural endowments—a condition seldom realized, since the type only appears among the crowd and in isolated instances as a rare exception. Average mankind may scorn the thinker and the dreamer, they may entirely fail to understand the profound speculations of the philosopher or the creations of the artistic imagination, but they at once recognize the man of will and judgment, whose will reacts to every new phenomenon with a new resolution, and bow their heads before him. If in a position that requires new adaptation they discover among them a man who knows how to command, they are happy to obey him. They are so clearly aware of their

own helplessness in the midst of constant change and perpetual flux, of their want of knowledge, the slowness and difficulty with which they find their way about, that they turn eagerly and follow the man who goes through the world and life with the certain tread of an old traveller. His directions, his commands, are a welcome relief from the necessity of forming their own judgments and carrying them out into act. Anyone who spares them this most troublesome form of cerebral activity is blessed by them as a saviour. Any physical effort, deprivation, hardship, or danger the commander may impose upon them seems lighter and easier to bear than the toil of self-determination, of making up their own minds, and the dread of having to find their way about the world without a guide. Thus the man of action, who issues commands with absolute decision, and in which no trace of doubt, delay, or hesitation is discernible, masters the average man at the first glance, so to speak. Men have an absolute *flair* for him; they flee to him. This is seen in every sphere, narrow and wide—in families, clubs, unions, corporations, societies great and small. All hasten to cast responsibility upon anyone who is willing to assume it. All are ready to follow anyone who resolutely takes the lead. It is only necessary to step boldly forward to be recognized as leader. The crowd do not inquire as to his objects; they believe he knows, and that is enough for them. They will follow him into morasses and up to precipices. No doubt as to the wisdom of their trust is awakened in them, even when they are being drowned and smothered, or dashed in pieces against the rocks. If death itself comes, and they reflect upon its cause at

all, it seems to them the result of unlucky chance, to which they are sacrificed by no fault of their leaders. The wilder and more boundless the claims of a commander, the greater the wonder and enthusiasm of his followers. Immeasurable and incomprehensible aims seem to them a special proof of his greatness. They resent making small sacrifices; but if the man they have recognized as their master demand the last and uttermost, they perform them with a sort of joy in which there mingles a pride in the greatness of their own achievement, admiration of selves in performing it, and thankful devotion to the man who has raised them to such a level of superhuman exertion. The average man can often be made to do things that he would never have carried out, never even have dared to dream of, things that the world is not wholly wrong in placing to the score of the ruthless commander, rather than of the obedient instrument.

To the average man the man of will and deeds appears as a creature of a superior mould, outwardly near, but inwardly impenetrably remote; trusted as an equal, but incomprehensible as a God; a mysterious fire from which fascination and terror radiate. He feels towards him as his primitive ancestors felt in the presence of the fearsome powers of nature and the insoluble riddle of the world—horror, admiration, and an irresistible impulse to humiliate himself and bow his head in the dust before him. Hero-worship is a primitive instinct in the human soul, and grows from the same soil as religion; it is a form of religion, a deification of that natural force before which man feels himself pitiably small and strengthless. Every great man of

will and deeds creates a religion, without wishing to do so—a religion of which he is the God. He is a God to those who submit to the compulsion of his will. In thankful submission they accept the fate that he imposes on them. Tyrants, conquerors, and commanders have aroused enthusiastic devotion in their followers. They have accepted with ecstatic joy all the evils laid upon them by their idols. The average man naturally approaches the man who is sure of himself and knows how to command with folded hands and bended knees. He does not distinguish between different sources of energy of will. The madman, whose ruthless will, checked by no restraints, is morbidly stimulated to the point of delirium, will, so long as his madness does not take a form in which it is easily recognized by the ignorant, and sometimes even then, rouse the same enthusiastic devotion and attract the same fanatical partisans as the sanest and most harmonious genius. One need only recall the examples of John of Leyden, Charles XII. of Sweden, or the Argentine dictator Rosas. Only the unconquerable resistance of reality at last opened the eyes of some of the ardent worshippers, and enabled them to judge whether their idol had been directed by rational judgments or the visions of madness.

The eager readiness of the crowd to submit to his commands inevitably rouses in the superior man the conviction that he has a natural right to use them for his own ends. The only consideration that the crowd demands or receives at his hands is careful and economical usage of a valuable piece of property. At the most, he refrains from exhausting the soil, or killing

prematurely the hen that lays the golden eggs. The whole bent of the mind of the superior man who is born to command is egoistic, not altruistic. His will is directed to his own advantage, not to that of the crowd. Any good that accrues to them does so as the by-product of acts solely directed to the purpose of satisfying his own needs. The celebration of conquerors as benefactors, and the devotion often accorded to them by the crowd, is a form of self-complacent anthropomorphism, like the attribution to the sun, which sustains all life on earth, of a conscious desire to gratify mankind with light and warmth. Thus, the gratitude of the crowd transfers its own sentiments to the mind of the great man, whose plans and actions are as little directed to their benefit as is the energy with which the sun irradiates the earth. When Augustus gave peace to the Roman world; when Charlemagne spread instruction and superintended law and government by his *missi dominici;* when Henry IV. wished that every subject might have a fowl in his pot on Sunday; when Frederick the Great called himself the first servant of the State; and when Alexander II. emancipated the serfs, the object they all had before them was in every case the same—to make their own rule and command easier and more productive, and therefore more pleasant to themselves, by the perfection of their instrument, the State, and its institutions, and by preventing contumacy and increasing productivity on the part of the crowd—in a word, by behaving like good landlords who manure and weed their fields.

No doubt there exist, side by side with the men of will and deeds, men whose hearts are full of love for

the world and dreams of universal happiness, whose thoughts and actions are not directed by their own egoism, but by the good of humanity as a whole, and who find their highest satisfaction in sacrificing themselves for their fellow-men. It is painful to have to judge these radiant figures, who must attract the most profound love and admiration in all who behold them, by the dry light of reason; but psychological analysis must eschew sensibility, and no piety should compromise its results. There is something unnatural about a tenderness devoted, not to definite individuals, but to an aggregate of unknown persons—an abstraction without personality. Men whose actions are animated by such a feeling as this fall within the category of the abnormal; they are mystics whose emotions are morbid and their instincts more or less perverted. They sway between flight from the world and a fierce desire to redeem it by their blood. They are saints, reformers, revolutionaries. They found holy orders, preach penance, and create constitutions; in more recent times they found societies and speak in the streets and parks; but they also throw bombs and set conspiracies on foot. We are only speaking of the genuine protagonist of the gospel of brotherly love, whose passionate altruism is alloyed by no conscious admixture of self. It is unnecessary to point out that they find clever imitators, who gratify their greedy vanity or other sordid desires behind the mask of love of mankind; such practised cheats are outside our present scope. It is very rare for the specific emotionalism, the organic premise of self-forgetful altruism, to be combined with attention, with a sense of reality, and with judgment. The eager

friend of man hardly ever knows the real needs of mankind as a whole, or of the greater part of it; he will sacrifice his whole life in the struggle to remove evils that, though widespread, are incapable of cure, or that occur seldom, and cause distress to very few. It is much to have helped even these few without thought of self. As a rule, however, the activity of enthusiastic philanthropists is not directed to the removal of evils so much as the provision of new possibilities of joy for mankind as a whole. They strive to satisfy desires felt by hardly anyone but themselves, which they have observed, not in their fellow-men, whose benefactors they wish to be, but in their own abnormal natures. For one Dunant, who founded the Red Cross Order, one Plimsoll, who put an end to the cold-blooded murdering of sailors by sending them out in vessels that, though heavily insured, were quite unseaworthy, one founder of vacation schools, there are hundreds of founders of Bible societies, missionary unions, ethical movements, committees for decorating balconies and window-boxes with flowers, associations for the abolition of the lifting of the hat, etc.—societies, that is, of no possible utility save to their founders and a few persons of like mind.

Great altruists have no effective influence on the average man. No crowd submits to their will. They are not capable of rousing swarms of followers to exertion or extracting services from them. Their thoughts and ideas become powerful only when they are appropriated by the daring selfishness of some egoist, who uses any means to gain his ends. Thus hardened politicians, whose aims are directed to the

interest of a ruling class, will carry out the schemes of insurance against accidents and the Old Age Pension conceived by the disinterested friends of the expropriated.

Compelled to adapt itself to unfavourable conditions or to succumb, the species has developed its nerve-centres until the brain has become capable of artificial attention, of knowledge, of correct inferences as to causes and effects, and of the conception and execution of extraordinarily complicated actions directed by aims that are present, not in a concrete, but an imagined form. This faculty is present to a very different degree in different individuals. The possession of a greater supply of the associations acquired by attention or memory, more swiftness and more accuracy in combination and separation of ideas, a more powerful control of the will over the motor stimuli—that is, a higher general level of energy in the nerve-cells—gives to the favoured individual a superiority over those who do not possess these faculties in the same degree, and inevitably makes him their master.

Such are the psychological premises of all those social relations of men whose establishment, maintenance, development, and destruction determine the course of history: on the one hand a minority of superior, on the other a majority of average, men. The former understand, by virtue of their sense of reality, their correct knowledge of cause and effect, and their penetration into the regular connection of phenomena, that the easiest and most profitable mode of adaptation for them is to use, and, if necessary, to abuse, other men for their own ends—that is, the method of ruthless exploitation,

energetic parasitism. They possess the ability and the strength of will to subdue the herd to their service by flattery, deception, or command, as one or the other method promises the best result.[1] The latter—the average men—submit consciously or unconsciously to their superiors, and make efforts, often amounting to self-sacrifice, to insure for them the most favourable conditions of existence; their adaptation consists in obedience to those who think, will, and decide for them, who perform those highest and finest functions of the brain for which they are themselves much less perfectly organized.

These relations, between the superior man who commands and takes and the average man who submits and gives, appear in a typically simple and luminous form only under primitive conditions. In the beginning, superiority must have taken the form of greater muscular strength or skill and greater intrepidity. Then the superior man's title to command had to be proved with fist and club, by practised wrestling, hurling, and shooting, bold attack, and successful stratagem; he had to subdue the average man to his will by immediate personal compulsion, later by the reputation for invincibility. At a rather more advanced stage of development the superior man no longer subdued the average man by beating or strangling him, but by the moral influence of attractive promises to be redeemed at a distant date, terrible suggestions of supernatural power—in a word, by illusions, which called up feelings of pleasure and pain, and enslaved him by means of hope

[1] Machiavelli, "The Prince": "The world must be governed by force or fraud."

or fear.[1] In this phase the superior man is not a terrible warrior, but a priest, magician, prophet, or demagogue.

As development proceeded, the family group expanded to a race, a people, and society was formed, conditions became more complex, and the influence of the superior man upon the average, instead of being effected direct from man to man, proceeded indirectly, through instruments. These instruments are traditions and institutions, which, again, are but the petrified will of former superior men. The law of least effort regulates the exploitation of the weak by the strong. The strong man wishes to economize effort as much as possible, even in his parasitism. His method is to employ association of ideas and habit in the minds of those whom he exploits. He influences the former by symbols; the latter enables him to build up and utilize permanent institutions which make and keep the crowd subservient automatically, and, as a rule, without any exertion on his part.

Symbols take the place of the tangible methods of violence, and call into the consciousness, by association, the ideas connected with them. When the warrior has brandished his club long enough with murderous results, he finds a symbolic weapon adequate to bring to the recollection of the crowd the bloody deeds accomplished by the actual brand. Thus the battle-axe becomes the staff of office found among the oldest prehistoric implements; thus the head-dress, which distinguishes the mightiest warrior in battle, to inspire

[1] For the importance of the part played by illusion in history, compare, among others, Georg Adler, "The Significance of Illusions in Political and Social Life," Berlin, 1907.

terror in the foe, becomes the crown; and thus the ruler exacts from the subservient crowd marks of honour symbolic of the unconditional submission of the vanquished. Obeisance, bending of the knee, prostration, folding or raising of the hands, are all postures in which the vanquished awaits, unarmed, the death-stroke of the victor, or the mercy which only his pity can conceive. Since the appeal of the magician and the priest is essentially to the imagination of the crowd, he has no weapons; he needs symbols only, and these symbols are more numerous, and play a more important part in religion and culture than in the State. Since the difference between the superior and the average man is a difference of degree or quantity, not of substance, and since their intellectual life proceeds according to the same rules, only with a varying degree of energy, it is not surprising that in time the symbols have a powerful effect on the ruler as well as on the ruled, and call up trains of associated ideas in the former which they were intended to arouse only in the latter.

The ruler is preserved, by that sense of reality which we have learned to regard as his most salient characteristic, from connecting with the external signs belonging to the supreme power, with the lofty dignitaries of State and of the ruling class, the vague ideas of trembling veneration and the strong emotions accompanying them—emotions which they were intended to evoke in the subject; from valuing the symbols of subjection almost as highly as the very practical and useful dues that accrue from it. The primitive hero and conqueror swings his club, and the threatening gesture provides him with herds, wives, slaves, hunting-grounds, or what-

ever else he wants. The civilized ruler appears with crown and sceptre, and is greeted with a homage that, though purely symbolic, gives him hardly less pleasure than the Civil List, not because homage premises the punctual payment of the Civil List, but because it gives him pleasure in itself. Kings respect the orders and titles that they themselves confer almost as much as do those upon whom they are conferred and the crowd behind them. This feeling, far from being confined to kings who are remote descendants of the founder of a dynasty, and never could have risen to the highest place by the force of their own right arm or their own brain, is found even in men like Napoleon, who are the authors of their own greatness.

We have seen that all civil institutions spring from the parasitic desire on the part of a man of force to secure his exploitation of the many. This is the origin of retainers, bodyguards, a warrior caste, a privileged or noble class, regular taxation, and the machinery for carrying it out; legal, educational, and commercial arrangements, etc. All these institutions survive their creators, and the crowd which finds itself born into them, and ignorant of any state of things without them, becomes so completely accommodated to them, both physically and mentally, that it feels them an inseparable part of its conception of the world, which it could not imagine without them. This habit on the part of the crowd of living in and with the institutions into which it has been born will long afford them a secure, almost unassailable position. The continued existence of any institutions which have already existed for a certain space of time is secured by the early stage at

which habits become firmly fixed in the average man, the misoneistic horror with which he regards any disturbance of these habits, and the impenetrable obstinacy with which he opposes any attempt to change them. Without any knowledge of the psychological mechanism of this phenomenon of adaptation, organized association, or misoneism, Aristotle perceived the fact empirically, from observation of reality, and expressed it clearly in the words "To enforce obedience law needs only the force of habit." [1]

The multitude have no historical sense; that has already been indicated. They know nothing and care nothing about the origin of things. It follows, from their incapacity to detect underlying connections or to trace back the causes and effects of phenomena beyond a certain distance, that all existing institutions appear to them as something given, whose origin is lost, like that of humanity, of the earth, of nature itself, in the mysterious unknown. They may complain of them as they do of the cold in winter, its hail and its storms, but they accept them as they accept everything immutable. The obscurity of their origin gives them a mystic character, with which religious emotions are connected by the psychic process of analogy. Priests, who are, as a rule, sedulous servants of the government, rarely its opponents, can easily describe existing institutions as ordained by God, invest them with a supernatural sanction, and demand that they should be loved and reverenced. A system of public instruction, where it exists, will assist by bringing up the youth in the same views. The necessity of existing institutions becomes an article

[1] "Politics," vol. ii., p. 5.

of faith, which is either proclaimed as a dogma or staunchly defended by specious sophistry. All the intellectual influences to which the crowd is open unite in fostering the idea that any criticism of existing institutions is blasphemous, stupid, ignorant, or mad, and any attempt to alter or repeal them a crime against the peace, security, and happiness of every individual.

The superior man reckons with the organized habits of the average crowd. His egoism employs different means for its satisfaction in an old, compact, and firmly established State from those applicable to the simple conditions of primitive barbarism. He no longer waves his axe above the head of the individual whom he wishes to subdue; he does not even permit armed servants to spread terror before them; instead he masters the machinery of State, and thus acquires at a single blow the power that in an unorganized crowd could only have been won by a series of acts of violence directed against individuals. He disturbs the habits of the multitude as little as possible; he makes them useful.

The parasitic egoism of the strong man assumes the most different forms, and passes, according to the degree of energy it possesses, through every stage, from the lowest desire for pleasure, through greed, vanity, and ambition, to the hunger for power and that inability to endure the thought of resistance, any limitation of personal omnipotence, which is allied to the hypertrophy of self that develops into megalomania. One is content with small satisfactions: he seeks to win his way to political power by his pliancy and observation of the idiosyncrasies of the men who are its guardians. He

is the typical opportunist. At school he acquires the good graces of his teacher by flattery and obsequiousness; at the examination he studies the little preferences of the examiners; when an official, he pays court to those above him; by means of invitations, intrigues, and the influence of women, he becomes an academician, obtains titles and orders, and ends by dying as a pillar of society and the State, respectable and influential, surrounded by toadies, and envied by people in general. Another looks higher: he would not receive but distribute honours. In an absolute monarchy he attaches himself to the person of the ruler, studies him, and tries to make himself indispensable to him—in other words, he tries to master him and use him for the accomplishment of his own will. Under a modern democracy he comes forward at popular meetings; is at pains to acquire an influence over the crowd and to win their votes by appealing to their emotions and prejudices, by making promises and juggling with illusions; at the same time he tries to force himself into the inner circles of the leading people. Once in office, he continues his activity until he has become a minister, party leader, or, in a republic, President. Others, though these are more rare, will not stop short of supreme power. They do not employ, or not to any great extent, the method of subservience, but rather that of force, much after the fashion of primitive man—that of mutiny, rising, military revolt, dictatorship, *coup d'état*. They are represented on a small scale by such men as Nicola di Rienzi, Jack Cade, Masaniello; on a big scale, and on the biggest, by Oliver Cromwell, Washington, Napoleon I. and III., and Louis Kossuth.

The instinct of exploitation that the man of will and deeds retains enables him to display his organic superiority in another sphere, in other fields of action, when it is directed to the amassing of wealth by speculations on the Stock Exchange, company promoting, the formation of trusts, cartels, and monopoly undertakings. Mighty financiers manage average men in the same way as do politicians, courtiers, and military despots. They begin by conjuring up illusions and intoxicating weak heads with their delights; then, as their power grows, they intimidate some and rouse the cupidity of the others by rewards and promises, purchase useful allies by a cleverly graduated system of shares, and so build up a human pyramid, on to the top of which they climb over backs, shoulders, and heads. The amassers of gold belong to the same family as the demagogue, the party leader, and the king-maker; this is not the place to enter into the psychic differences between them. Member of the same family, but a poor relation, an unsuccessful cousin, is the professional criminal, who has to content himself with the poorest and least remunerative form of exploitation, because he only possesses the parasitic instinct, without the intellectual equipment in himself, or the social forces behind him, to enable him to satisfy it on a large scale or in the grand style.

All these activities and careers conform to a single type. A man who is richly endowed by nature in any direction employs or misuses his superiority in order to subjugate others to his will, obtain possession of the fruits of their labour, or use them simply and solely for his own profit or pleasure. According to the degree

and quality of his superiority, he makes them serviceable to himself by compulsion, fascination, illusion, or gross deception. To take a few examples. The politician uses the parliamentary system as a ladder up which he may climb from being a secretary to a member, parliamentary reporter, or honorary secretary to some political club, to member of a parliamentary committee, member of Parliament itself, party leader, and finally minister. The scholar can use the organization of the University or academy as a means to obtaining a position and reputation independent of the worth of his scientific attainments. The financier employs the mechanism of the Stock Exchange and the limited liability company to draw the small competences of the many into his net and combine them into a vast fortune. Even the criminal has arrangements at his disposal which render his evil-doing less arduous, such as the Mafia, the Camorra, the Mano Negra, and the unions of thieves and burglars, with a far-reaching system of division of labour, that exist in large towns and are also international in their scope.

From the psychological point of view all institutions represent organized habits. They have been materialized by the human brain, and have no existence apart from man. The superior man must therefore approach men through habit, and try to turn it to his advantage. He may either adapt himself to it or try to alter it. The lower order of aspirant adapts himself. Rabagas acquired reputation and influence as a revolutionary, but became reactionary when he attained the ministry. The powerful personality alters it: Robespierre found a loyal people, and taught it to convey its king and queen

to execution on a tumbril. Yet there are some habits so deeply rooted and so strongly organized that no individual can stand against them. Cromwell failed to destroy the habit of loyalty in the English people, which made the Restoration possible immediately after his death. Napoleon could not overcome the habit of religion in the French people, or avoid a concordat with Rome. Were a negro of the highest genius to arise in the United States, a Napoleon in generalship, a Cavour in diplomacy, a Gladstone in eloquence, and a Bismarck in strength of will, he could never attain the highest position there, because the habit of race hatred would ever be more powerful than his genius. In Russia today it would be impossible for a Jew, whether he had been baptized or no, to rouse a mass movement like that led by Lasalle in Germany in the fifties and sixties; or to rise to the premiership, as Disraeli did in England. Each time that a personality endeavours to subdue others to its will there is a clash between this will and the habits opposed to it: the more deeply rooted, general, and essential are their habits, the more powerful must be the will that is to overcome them, until it reaches a limit beyond which the power of a single will cannot go. Napoleon was one of the most powerful personalities the species has hitherto produced. Yet he was overcome by weak contemporaries like Alexander I., Francis II., Frederick William III., and George III., because they were supported by the habits of the whole of Europe, with the exception of France, and could demand and obtain from their peoples exertions which even Napoleon's mighty intellect could not call forth.

It is necessary to guard against the possibility of mis-

understanding. All the preceding examples show the exploiter rising above his fellows in order to satisfy his desires at their expense. Nothing has been said of the nobler type of ambition, which strives for power and influence for the sake of serving mankind, and is impelled only by the desire of making the world better, more beautiful, and happier. The reason for this apparent omission is that the expression "superior man" is used in a purely biological, not in an ethical, sense. It merely represents the individual who is equipped with organic energy above the average, especially in the sphere of judgment and will. The superior man in this sense uses his superiority selfishly for his own advantage, not selflessly for the good of others. That this is so is painful to anyone who seeks to see history as governed by a moral ideal; but it is an observed fact which admits of no exception. The selfless friends of man are not opportunists. They have no ambition. They are incapable of making incessant efforts to subdue the many to their will. Their influence is confined to their words and example. They spend their lives as settlers, penitents, or teachers, like Buddha Cakya-Muni; they are crucified like Jesus, or, to take smaller instances, burned like Savonarola, or hanged like John Brown, the enemy of negro slavery. The influence of men who wish to save their fellows is felt, as I have already shown, through others—disciples, perhaps, of developed will-power, who work for some reward, real or imagined, earthly or hereafter; or rulers and politicians, who find something in the doctrine of salvation which they can use for their own selfish ends. Elaborate psychological analysis would be necessary before the

rare instances of the use of power by those in authority for the good of their subjects could be ascribed to pure altruism. Titus, "the delight of the human race," did not seem so benevolent to all the people under his sway as he did to the Romans. Alfred the Great was certainly a benefactor to his realm, but, in giving peace, order, well-being, and education to his disordered State, he was in the first instance working for himself. Joseph II. is probably the best and most indubitable example of a philanthropist on the throne. But it is very doubtful whether his qualities were such as to have raised him, by his own strength, above his fellow-men. He was Emperor because born in the purple. He was the inheritor, not the founder, of a dynasty. It is on a materially lower plane that the altruists who combine strength of will with love for their fellows are to be found—St. Francis of Assisi, St. Vincent de Paul, Peabody, Dr. Barnardo, Dunant, perhaps General Booth. But the men who scale the heights of power and make their mark on history have been spurred on by selfishness, and delayed by no backward glances at their fellow-men.

At the lowest stage of civilization there is probably little difference between the individuals composing any race or horde. No one rises high above the others: exploitation is confined to the family, the wife, and growing children. The arrangements of life are determined by custom—that is, by habit; such institutions as there are exist, not to afford privilege to anyone, but to economize effort by sparing the need for fresh decisions; there are no leaders or rulers, or they possess small dignity or power. Another case where mutual

exploitation within the race or people is impossible is that of a body composed of individuals of remarkable judgment and will-power, who are, to use the phrase, a match for one another. Such a community is superficially denominated a democracy; as a matter of fact, it is a loose confederation of aristocrats who, impatient of any overlordship, live side by side in proud and jealous independence, remaining poor because each is dependent on his own labour, and this in a primitive State, under natural conditions, can provide the bare necessities of life, but allow no one to become rich. Such, according to Vico, was the condition of the Quirites in the early days of Rome. History teaches that this condition of things did not last long. The gifted people overflowed its boundaries, first to plunder, then to conquer; it made itself master of foreign peoples of less force, among whom it formed a ruling nobility, and then carried out the exploitation made possible by its organic superiority, first in the countries it had subdued, then in colonies; finally, with the help of the power and riches thus acquired, in its own land upon compatriots who had been slower and less adaptable, and had remained at home in poverty.

The limited extent to which the multitude are able to free themselves from their habits, and direct their thought and will along lines outside their organized associations, not only makes it easier for the superior man to master and exploit them with the aid of existing institutions which they occupy and utilize; it also renders it possible for power to be retained by individuals who are not themselves in any sense superior men, and never could have risen above the crowd by their own strength.

Through his heirs, whether they be offspring or successors, the strong man's superiority is continued beyond the grave. One generation of the multitude hands its habits of obedience and servitude to the next, and one generation of mediocre exploiters hands the usufruct of this habit to the next. A conqueror secures the crown and sceptre, and all the advantages insured by their possession, to a long line of successors; and a group of successful plunderers transmit to their remote descendants the privileges of a noble class founded on force. The crowd is so completely accustomed to seeing power concentrated in the hands of the dynasty and nobility that they regard it as a necessary part of the arrangements of the world, without which they could not imagine its going on. The dynasty, the nobility, and the high official class—so far as they are not the same—have long ago lost the faculty of swift, ready adaptation, the keen sense of reality, and the power of will and judgment that belonged to the creative spirit of their ancestors; but they remain on their heights by the habit of command, as the crowd remain in their depths through the habit of obedience. They have no doubt that they are born to rule; they proceed with the same confidence with which the crowd follows them. The routine of government will often go on for a very long time, and not appear inadequate, until natural events, the progress of general development under the influence of new knowledge, inventions, or discoveries, or contact with some powerful and creative will, necessitate judgment, resolution, action, that transcend the traditional routine. Then the inadequacy of the ruling class and the decrepitude of the institutions created for

their advantage alone stand revealed. The old order collapses, and a new arises in response to the will or the advantage of a new ruler and exploiter.

The symbol of power is sufficient so long as no actual exercise of power is demanded of it. But when it is required to prove its effectiveness against the resistance of dynamic forces it refuses its office, and is revealed as what it is—mere imagination. The mace that lies before the Speaker of the English House of Commons is an excellent defence of the rights and dignity of the chair, so long as they defend themselves and no one attacks them. An irruption of soldiers, such as that which took place in France on Brumaire 28, or an incursion of the mob like that of February 24, 1848, or September 4, 1870, would show that mace in its true light—an old-fashioned bauble. The habit of the many lends to the gestures of those in authority the force of actual compulsion. Not until that force fails to overcome decided resistance do they realize that it has no existence outside their imagination.

All the institutions of the State and of society originally correspond to some definite practical purpose, as to which no one is in any doubt, neither those who create nor those who suffer from them. They naturally appear rationally justified only from the point of view of those for whose advantage they are created. Very soon, however, they become a part of the general habit. No one troubles about their origin or remembers what their real object was. The result is that the institutions are irrationally administered, used for purposes quite different from those for which they were intended, or treated simply as means to some selfish end. Everyone knows

the story of the sentry placed beside a freshly-painted seat to prevent anyone's sitting down on it, who was then retained for many decades as part of the garrison, although the seat had not only long ago dried, but actually been removed, so that no one knew why a sentry should be there at all. This story would epitomize all institutions if so adapted that an overseer, specially appointed and paid, were put to watch over the freshly-painted bench instead of the soldier. This overseer would realize for a few days that he had to warn passers-by against messing their clothes against the wet oil-paint. But when the bench dried he would cease to trouble about it, and devote his attention to winning favour with his superiors, and retaining his post. As time went on he would quite forget the duty that he originally had to fulfil, and only know that he got a certain wage every month from a certain office. Later on, if a new master were inclined to cut down this incomprehensible expense, the watchman would invent some pretended activity, show the greatest zeal in the execution of his office, and probably succeed in proving eloquently and convincingly that to deprive him of his salary would not only be doing him a grievous injustice, but seriously undermining the foundations of general security.

Private interests crystallize round every public institution, and then defend them with the greatest energy, and, as a rule, maintain them long after they have become useless, and, indeed, harmful in many directions. Conflict arises when any institution is subjected to rational criticism on the part of those who have nothing to gain from it, are inconvenienced, disturbed, op-

pressed, or humiliated by it, or simply take exception to its purposelessness. Men, being slaves of habit, shut their ears against this criticism as long as they can, and even become irate because it disturbs them. Those who profit by the institution in question accuse the critics, with indignant contempt, of possessing no understanding or knowledge of history, and show them, with an air of haughty superiority, the advantage, necessity, and justification of its origin. The rhetoricians and sophists retained by the State for its defence in the person of professors, members of academies, and Privy Councillors, employ an abundance of learned phrase to prove the superficiality of the criticism and the insignificance of the critics from a moral, political, or social point of view. They are right, nevertheless; for when once "reason has become nonsense and benefits a curse," as Goethe said, reason in the past is no adequate excuse for nonsense in the present; nor is an existing curse rendered more tolerable by the assurance that it was a benefit only yesterday. The alert rationalism of a minority with a keen sense for reality is as a worm gnawing at the foundations of the existing order, and perpetually testing their strength. War is permanently going on between the parasitic selfishness of beneficiaries, and the immovable sloth and incapacity of the crowd to trace the effects of an institution on the one hand, and on the other the keen perception, comprehension of the connection of complicated phenomena, hatred of routine, and strength of will of the few. Victory falls finally to those who display the greatest energy in that fight. The worst institution has never perished from its own inherent badness; the most rational criti-

cism has never triumphed by virtue of its rationality, unless it was incorporated in a personality able to bring into the field an organic energy greater than that possessed by the defenders of the bad. Moreover, the critic requires, not a slight, but an immense superiority over the defender of the existing order, for an attack on his own personal interests, his own income, his rank and social privileges, rouses even in mediocrity an energy and enthusiasm such as is only inspired in persons of very lofty stamp and remarkable force by the unselfish struggle for improvement.

The history of mankind is composed of the actions of individual men, and individual men are roused to action by a single instinct—by some strong and immediate need, or, to use a more general and psychologically more accurate expression, by some pain which they wish to escape. The energy of their action stands in direct relation to the violence of their discomfort: if the latter rises to pain or to torment and intolerable agony, the energy becomes violent, powerful, even heroic. There is hardly any difference of opinion as to this human mechanism among philosophers, historians, and sociologists from the earliest to the latest times. The fact is more or less clearly seen, and expressed with more or less vagueness or definiteness, in them all. Aristotle, in his "Politics," determines the end of the State to be the happiness, eudæmonia, of the citizens. According to the Benthamite thesis, all the activity of government and society is directed to giving the citizens feelings of pleasure. This is a mistaken substitution of positive pleasure for the negative avoidance of pain, which is the only benefit which is asked by the many of general

institutions or can be afforded by them. Apart from a few hangers-on of the court, who would like to share the plunder of the greater parasites, and obtain offices, promotions, and privileges at their hands, the citizens do not expect happiness from the sovereign; they are well satisfied if he impose no hardship upon them, protect them against acts of violence, and at best assist in times of undeserved distress out of the common fund—in a word, if he protect them against suffering. St. Augustine is involved in the same obscurity as Aristotle when he speaks [1] of "happiness" as the fulfilment—or highest aim—of all "desirable things," and sees in it the lever of human action. No doubt every man seeks for happiness, consciously or unconsciously. In this general sense Aristotle's eudæmonism is an irrefutable truth. But mere longing for some imaginary state of bliss seldom, or very exceptionally, rouses him to effort. The real incentive to action in him is not an imaginary feeling of pleasure, but an immediately realized sense of discomfort, which rouses him to defend and free himself. Locke [2] has expressed this with incomparable clearness: "The chief, if not the only, spur to human industry and action is uneasiness. . . . What determines the will is not, as is generally supposed, the greater good in view, but some (and, for the most part, the most pressing) uneasiness a man is at present under. . . . The greatest positive good

[1] "De Civitate Dei," v., Præfatio: "Quoniam constat omnium rerum optandarum plenitudinem esse felicitatem."

[2] John Locke, "An Essay concerning Human Understanding," twenty-fifth edition, London, 1824, book ii., chap. xx., p. 172, paragraph 6; chap. xxi., p. 187, paragraphs 29, 31, 37

determines not the will . . . until our desire, raised proportionately to it, makes us uneasy in the want of it . . . because uneasiness alone is present, and it is against the nature of things that what is absent should operate where it is not."

This is true, and Romagnosi [1] might just as well omit the last three of his " four laws of civilization "—that is to say, its four motive forces—" the spurs of need, of conflict, of balance, and of continuity "; for the last three are meaningless. The spur of need is enough. Herbert Spencer agrees with Locke that " necessity alone conquers natural indolence in every sphere." Other sociologists and economists describe the motive force that dominates human action in different words from those employed by Locke and Spencer, but their meaning is the same. J. Lippert (" History of Human Civilization ") regards the preservation of life as the motive force in history. Ward calls the motive force " desires," of which he enumerates five—self-preservation, sexual desire, the desire of beauty, of morality, and of intellectual satisfaction. Yet all these instincts and desires are but special cases of a single instinct or desire—the instinct of self-preservation in its widest sense —and only issue in action when they are powerful enough to be felt as discomfort and an acute desire for a change in any given condition. A. Wagner,[2] content, like Ward, to enumerate instances without proceeding to general laws, finds among the motive powers that domi-

[1] " Del' indole e dei fattori del incivilmento," quoted by R. Rocholl, " The Philosophy of History," Göttingen, 1878, p. 241.

[2] A. Wagner, " First Principles of Political Economy," third edition, Leipzig, 1892, vol. i., p. 33 *et seq.*

nate human action the struggle for education (Ward's intellectual satisfaction), for honour, for satisfaction of the conscience, etc. Action, no doubt, does proceed from these feelings, but only when any one of them becomes an immediate need. Subject to this limitation is Bentham's statement that "well-being is the object of all human thought," and Simmel's, that "every conflict for economic good is a conflict for the sensations of comfort and enjoyment." "Well-being" and "sensations of comfort and enjoyment" cannot of themselves, as Locke has shown, initiate action. Gumplowicz [1] rightly recognizes need as the driving force in the construction of society and of history to-day, without observing, as may be mentioned in passing, that he thereby refutes his own theory that the construction of society does not proceed from the individual. But it is obvious that a need can only be felt by an individual, enter the consciousness of an individual, and rouse an individual to action.

This view is in no sense contradicted by Herbart's statement,[2] "The forces operative in history are indubitably psychological in their origin"—a view shared by Jouffroy, Auguste Comte, and others, and expressed by Lacombe [3] in the sentence, "Needs appear in history, not as biological, but as emotional desires: human behaviour reflects psychical and not biological needs." This is true, but so self-evident that it need not be said.

[1] Ludwig Gumplowicz, "Principles of Sociology," second edition, Vienna, 1905, p. 204.

[2] "Herbart's Works," edited by Hartenstein, vol. vi., p. 33.

[3] P. Lacombe, "De l'histoire considérée comme science," Paris, 1894, p. 32.

A need that does not become an idea in the consciousness may excite reflex action, but not considered and co-ordinated acts of will. It is mere play upon words to express the fact that all human action proceeds from needs, or, rather, from feelings of discomfort, in the high-sounding phrase, "Men are only moved by spiritual forces, by ideas." The two assertions are not contradictory, but identical. Of course, the feeling of discomfort must be an idea, the need must be an idea, before it can initiate action. But it is the need, the feeling of discomfort, that initiates action through the medium of the idea.

The motive force of pain operates in accordance with a prescribed form. The whole of life is a battle against sensations of immediate discomfort; every action, conscious or unconscious, is the attempt to ward off something painful, or modify some uncomfortable condition. Man, like every other living thing, up to a certain stage endures the discomfort, tries to adapt himself to it or put up with it as best he may, so long as he either sees no means of escaping it at all, or only a possibility which he judges to be beyond his powers, too dangerous, or too uncertain of result. Such judgment is to a great extent a matter of personal equation. The weakling, the average man who hates everything new, and is ossified by routine, will submit to suffering for a longer time, and will offer less resistance to it than the energetic, superior man, who is capable of new combinations. The former timidly clings to Hamlet's view that

> "Makes us rather bear those ills we have
> Than fly to others that we know not of,"

or comforts himself with Pliny the younger ("Letters," vi. 2): "Mihi autem . . . leviora incommoda quod assuevi"—"A discomfort to which I am used is less troublesome to me." The strong man refuses to be accustomed to his pain; fear of the unknown does not reconcile him to the disagreeable known. A point comes when even the most insignificant average man can and will bear his misery no longer. As Heinrich von Kleist puts it ("Penthesilea," Act XV.):

> "Impatiently man shakes from off his shoulders
> A weight of suffering more than he can bear:
> Beyond a point endurance cannot go."

When this unendurable point is reached the tortured man has but one thought—to put an end to his sufferings. But here the inadequacy of his brain comes in. Every sufferer is distinctly aware of the fact that he suffers, and the immediate cause of his suffering is also known to him: he sees the beadle who threatens and maltreats him; he sees the hangman who tortures or executes the recusants, the agents of tyrannic power ready to incarcerate or banish those who fall under their displeasure; he knows the Customs-house officer and the tax-collector, who wring from him the fruits of his labour or rob him of his possessions; he can account for all who cause him anxiety and humiliation, oppress him, disturb his habits, hinder his movements, offend his sensibilities, or do him hurt of any kind. But this is, as a rule, the limit of his comprehension. His intellect is not capable of going behind the visible instrument of his suffering to the power that wields it. He does not perceive the connection existing between the

social and administrative system, the characteristics of a ruler, of an all-powerful minister, of a privileged class; the pressure of natural forces, and those who in the last resort, without will or thought of their own, carry a baneful command or law into execution. His hatred and indignation are therefore hardly ever directed against the real causes of his sufferings, but always solely against the passive javelin with which, themselves unseen, they pierce his body or his soul. Direct concrete perception leaves him in the lurch. He is reduced to imagining possibilities, to forecasting the necessary effects of a given cause, to estimating all the chances of carrying out what seems to him a useful alteration of existing circumstances, in spite of existing institutions and the powerful interests defending them, and in opposition to the habits of the crowd. This demands a highly developed sense of reality, the gift of keen observation—that is to say, sustained and concentrated attention; it demands the capacity to build up, intellectually, a long chain of real and logically connected deductions, and to eliminate from that chain with unwearied watchfulness the arbitrary inferences that the wandering fancy will always try to smuggle in for the sake of convenience, although one such, if left unnoticed, will vitiate the whole train by rendering it arbitrary; it demands, in a word, all that the average man does not possess. His efforts to free himself from feelings of discomfort that have become intolerable remain therefore, as a rule, fruitless. A people drained dry by taxes will maltreat and drive off Customs-house officials and tax-collectors, and burn their books and desks. Starving peasants attack their landlord, and

reduce his castle to ashes. The people revolt, and fire and destruction follow. The result of those misdirected and spasmodic movements is, as a rule, that everything remains as it was. The sole advantage gained by the crowd is, at the last, that the burden is shifted from one shoulder to the other.

A rising need not be concerted, nor planned, nor organized. It is an automatic reflex action. It breaks out suddenly, ravaging and laying waste, and passes like a thunderstorm or whirlwind, whose path is strewn by ruins and corpses. Even a rising premises the existence in the dull crowd of someone whose feelings are stronger and his reactions more energetic than those of the others. He is the first to raise his voice and fist, and show the others the example without which they can do nothing. He is a Cleon, Jack Cade, or Masaniello —simple, thoughtless, ignorant, and at times no better than a beast let loose, but obviously somewhat more resolute and somewhat less ossified by habit than the others are.

A revolution, on the other hand, needs leaders and preparations. It can only be the work of superior men organically equipped, in the first instance, to develop new ideas and combinations, then to subdue others to their will, and compel them to recognize them unhesitatingly as leaders and rulers. The first premise, therefore, is strength of will; it is more important than knowledge, prescience, independence of thought—in a word, than intellectual superiority. Thus revolutions are readily aroused by enthusiasts possessed by one idea, or men who are decidedly off their balance, just because this mental disturbance rouses wild impulses within

them, blinds them to all obstacles, and induces them to throw caution and consideration to the winds. They gather enthusiastic crowds around them, who follow them as unsuspiciously as the children did the Pied Piper of Hamelin. It is only necessary that the masses should be suffering, and the leader persuade them that he will free them from their suffering. But the power of command cannot long be exercised by a strong will and a diseased brain. It must shiver at the resistance of reality, upon which its possessor had not reckoned, and which he can neither avoid nor overcome.

When power of thought is combined with energy of will, the leader forms rational plans which he endeavours to carry into execution. Then the revolution, instead of stopping at destruction, issues in the creation of new forms. A new state, new institutions and laws arise, and their creators are proudly convinced that they have converted suffering into pleasure, satisfied painful needs, and given happiness to a section of mankind. Soon, however, usually within one generation, and seldom much beyond it, it appears that the reconstruction has been based upon a subjective error, and fails in practice: the needs of the many, far from being satisfied, still exist, and are increasing; the painful feelings, if they have slightly altered their character, have not ceased to be: the hopes, the castles in the air, the dreams of bliss that accompany any revolution or any personal endeavour to alter an existing state of things, have given way to disillusionment, disenchantment, and discontent. The crowd is ready for a new undertaking under some leader of powerful will, who promises either to restore the old conditions, which always seem fairer in recollec-

tion than they were in fact, or to make them happy by some new plan. Thus revolutions are, as a rule, but halting stages on the path trod by suffering humanity on the way towards new adaptations which are to make its toilsome life easier and more agreeable: an endless search for the right track, and an endless wandering from it that cannot be avoided, though it brings the goal no nearer, since to stand still with one's burden is intolerable, and the notion that one is doing something to relieve it really does for the moment give a deceptive sense of relief.

Revolutions do not, as a rule, transform anything, with the exception of the hierarchy of rank. Generally they leave everything essentially as it is: the weak continue to be exploited, and the strong to exploit. New modes of adaptation to what is disagreeable prolong the endurance of what is endurable. Only, other individuals and classes take the place of those individuals and classes hitherto privileged to exploit. Revolution gives to some what it takes from others. It is a practical test of the symbols and prestige of power, which are tried and found wanting. It gives the strong the position inherited by the weak man, who maintained it simply because his strength was a tradition which had never been tested. It destroys an appearance which corresponded to no reality. But its effect does not last. "Red men are white men on the way; white men are red men arrived," as Alphonse Karr has said. A new order soon becomes petrified to a new routine; the new real strength soon dissipates itself in new symbols; new weakly heirs begin to live on the prestige of new strong ancestors. A long period of time presents the aspect

of a succession of waves of more or less equal size. The noisiest revolutions are very limited in their effect, and do not go very deep. Tocqueville[1] declares that "even the great French Revolution has had far less influence upon the course of development of French history than is believed." Lotze[2] lets fall a stimulating remark: "The unrest and variety manifest in constant revolutions and reconstructions, for which a connected meaning is sought, simply represents the history of the male sex: women make their way through the storm and stress, hardly affected by its changing aspects, renewing with perpetual uniformity the grand, simple forms of the life of the human soul." This needs one limitation, however. History is not that of the male sex, but of a small section of it; what Lotze says of women is true of the great majority of men.

We have been speaking of revolutions. It might be objected that historical advance is not always, perhaps not even mainly, due to revolution, but to at least an equal extent to slow, tentative, and peaceful innovations, limited in extent, directed by authority. The objection would be invalid. From a psychological point of view there is no difference between the revolution and the cautious, official reform. Every innovation breaks in upon habit, and compels new adaptations. Even the picture on a postage-stamp cannot be altered without disturbing someone and overcoming some opposition. The

[1] Quoted by Robert Flint, "The Philosophy of History in France and Germany," Edinburgh and London, 1874, p. 313.

[2] Hermann Lotze, "Microcosm: Idea of a History and Natural History of Mankind—an Attempted Anthropology," vol. iii., Leipzig, 1864, p. 49.

difference between revolution and reform or evolution is not a difference of essential, but of mass, extent, energy, rhythm. Revolution requires greater strength on the part of those who rouse it than reform does, because it has against it the weight of habit, the whole routine of life, the interests of the powerful, the symbols connected in the minds of the multitude with the ideas of power, legality, order, and respectability: on its side, only the superior will-power of its leaders, the sense of discontent of their followers, and the adaptability of the young, whose habits are not yet stereotyped, and whose discontent is less patient than that of the older generation. The advantage of reform is that it can be undertaken with smaller powers. It is set going with the aid of the whole machinery of society and the State, which embodies the habits of the multitude. It therefore departs less from routine, offends fewer people, and demands less new adaptation than revolution does. But the same cause operates in both—the discontent that is felt and understood as the need for change.

This need must be conceived in its most comprehensive form. It may be of a physical or spiritual nature. In the one case it is hunger; in the other some longing or some aspiration arising from within. One demands food and drink, warm clothing, and a comfortable place to dwell; another leisure and recreation, freedom from care for the coming day; yet another, beauty and luxury. One suffers from not being allowed on all occasions to speak his mother tongue; another because he must obey command; the third that he is not free to live according to the belief that seems to him his most essential possession. Exceptionally powerful natures demand room to

express their personality by overcoming and ruling others, and imposing their own will and opinions as the law governing the thought, feeling, and action of others. This feeling and recognition of a subjective need that demands satisfaction is the driving force behind the conqueror and the creator of religions, the dictator and party leader alike. It assumes every form—ambition, the competitive instinct, the desire for pleasure, pride, impatience, adventurousness, revenge; it is capable of every degree, from the languorous trouble of the mere longing reverie, which is satisfied with a vision or a sigh, or at best exhausts itself in some artistic activity, to the racking agony that seeks relief in violent deeds.

Human events, from the greatest to the smallest, fall under the same formulæ, which are always determined by the same psychic laws. The fundamental characteristic of adaptability is common to every living species, and not confined to humanity. In the case of average man, it is limited by the early age at which associations are organized and stereotyped into habits: superior men retain it longer and with more freedom, and are able to dissolve old thought complexes quickly and easily, and combine new. If these men combine unusual strength of will with their power of personal thought, they are the predestined rulers and leaders of the multitude, whom they use as instruments for the satisfaction of their needs, binding them to their service partly by compulsion, partly by promises of lightening their lot and satisfying their desires. Compulsion is exercised by personal force or by the weight of existing institutions which have been mastered; but in the last resort this appropriation of the machinery of government is the

victory of superior personality over the men who contort the machine. All action proceeds from a strongly-felt need; its direction and aims are determined by judgment based on experience. The more scanty are men's experiences, the more incompletely they are understood and retained, and the more erroneously they are interpreted, the more unsuited will the resultant actions be to satisfy the need. Thus human life is a strenuous process of rushing from one painful condition to another —a search, for the most part vain, for the satisfaction of needs that are always stabbing the consciousness afresh. But as ignorance diminishes and knowledge increases, the possibility grows that, if not the average, at least the superior men, and an increasing number of them, may be freed from the sense of pain. Such freedom from pain has almost always been in the last resort the result of a parasitic use of the exertions of others. Whether this must always be so will be considered in the following chapter.

CHAPTER VIII

THE QUESTION OF PROGRESS

For centuries thinkers have raised the question whether progress exists. Those who deny it are as numerous, as eloquent, and as well supported by proof as those who maintain it. The ancients, as a rule, did not believe in it. They had a vague suspicion that the world processes eternally pursued the same course, which they conceived of as a circular movement, perpetually recurring to the point at which it started. This is the meaning of the Orphic pictures and the mysterious teaching of Linus, and it is the view expressed in their different ways by Hesiod, Heraclitus, Democritus, Empedocles, Plato, and Zeno. Aristotle says clearly: "Everything is a cycle . . . the age of man, government, and the earth itself with its blossoming and withering away." Thucydides, too, rejects the notion of progress. Everything, he teaches, will always be as it is, so long as men are what they are—an extraordinarily superficial way of speaking, one must remark. Progress surely consists in men's not remaining as they are; and the question to be answered is, precisely, Are men as they were, and will they always be as they are?

The Pythagoreans, whose mystic astro-cosmology placed everything under the influence of the stars, were convinced that all the phenomena of the world and

human life must repeat themselves down to the smallest detail whenever a precisely similar constellation appeared in the heavens—an astrological form of the cycle theory of the Greek philosophers. Cicero [1] is literally repeating the doctrines of his Hellenic teachers when he speaks of the "wonderful cycles of political revolutions and changes." In so far as the ancients admitted the existence of change, they held it to be change for the worse. The Brahminical doctrine of the four Yugas, or ages of the world, held the earliest Yuga, said to have lasted for 4,800 years, to be the most perfect, the age of truth, and the omnipotence of the gods. In the same way the Greeks and Romans placed the golden age of happiness and peace in the past. The passages in Ovid (Aurea prima sata est ætas," etc.—"Metamorphoses," i. 89 *et seq.*) and Horace ("Ætas majorum, pejor avis, tulit—Nos nequiores, mox daturos, Progeniem vitiosiorem"—"The time of our fathers, inferior to that of our grandfathers, produced our inferior race, to give birth to a progeny even more despicable") expressing this view are familiar to everyone.

The moderns generally took a narrower view of the problem of progress: instead of including the world as a whole, they limited it to the human race. Machiavelli confined himself to the moral issue. "The world," he says in the Preface to the second book of his "Discourse on Titus Livius," "has always contained the same quantity of virtue and vice." Jean Bodin fully shares the views of Machiavelli and the

[1] "De Republica," i. 29: "Miri sunt orbes et quasi circuitus in rebus publicis commutationum et vicissitudinum."

ancients. Human transformations—"velut in orbem redire videntur"—seem to recur in a cycle. He does not believe in moral progress: the quantity of virtue and vice always remains the same. On the other hand, he is convinced that there has been material progress: his own, the sixteenth, century, seems to him, especially in the industrial sphere, to have surpassed all previous ones, in proof of which he adduces the sole—to him sufficient—instance of the new art of printing. Gioberti will have nothing to do with the notion of progress. At the close of the seventeenth century an active dispute [1] went on between those who supported and those who opposed the idea, turning, however, on both sides, solely on the question of progress in the sphere of art and poetry. It is noteworthy that even then many able judges of undoubted taste upheld the superiority of the moderns over the ancients, although but a small part of the works that form the proud possession of mankind to-day were then in existence. Goethe holds that "men become cleverer and more intelligent, but not better, happier, or more effective in action."

Another great poet, Lamartine, teaches that "the notion of progress is a dream, a Utopia, an absurdity." Schopenhauer opposes the notion of progress on *à priori* grounds. "Since the world is eternal, the theory of progress is necessarily false." This proposition postulates what is not proved, and is incapable of proof—the eternity of the world. If the postulate be admitted—and it is impossible not to admit it—the proposition

[1] Perrault, "Parallèle des anciens et des modernes," Paris, 1688. *Cf.* also Hippolyte Rigaut, "Histoire de la querelle des anciens et des modernes," Paris, 1856.

is logically irrefutable. It applies, however, to the universe, and not to humanity, which does not share its eternity. Lotze cleverly evades the obligation of deciding for one solution or the other. He admits progress in the sphere of knowledge, in the sense of the slow discovery of the unalterable laws that govern the world. In other words, progress consists in the recognition that there can be no progress. In another passage ("Microcosm," vol. iii., p. 29) he is less cautious, and admits frankly, "In history progress is hardly discernible." Following Vico, who revived the cyclical theory of the ancients in his "Ricorsi"—the constant repetition of the same events—Odysse Barot teaches ("Lettres sur la Philosophie de l'Histoire") that "progress is the swing of a pendulum, perpetually backwards and forwards," and development "the ceaseless recurrence of the same facts and thoughts." Fontenelle finds "the heart always the same, the intellect perfecting itself; passions, virtues, vices unaltered; knowledge increasing." Fénelon, that worthy optimist, will not even admit so much. He maintains, long before Rousseau, that "justice, wisdom, all the virtues, belong to the semi-savage state: all the vices arise and develop with civilization."

These testimonies could easily be multiplied. Enough have been quoted. On the other side we have Descartes decisively maintaining the reality of progress. Bacon [1] has no doubt of the superiority of the moderns over the ancients—at least, in science. Leib-

[1] "Novum Organum," i., Aphorismus 84: ". . . a nostra ætate (si vires suas nosset et experiri et intendere vellet) major multo quam a priscis temporibus expectari par est. . . ."

nitz [1] is not quite certain whether progress exists: "The human race may possibly attain in the course of time a higher degree of perfection than we can at present imagine." The Abbé St. Pierre naturally believes in a glorious unbroken progress, and so, which is more surprising, does Diderot. Condorcet boldly calls his survey of history and the philosophy of history a "view of the progress of mankind," and draws a fascinating picture of a future in which war will be unknown, the universal brotherhood of mankind realized, communication carried on by a common lauguage, and the enjoyment of life prolonged indefinitely. Reason will create a paradise for mankind. Condorcet, moreover, is only developing, with superfluous additions, the views already expressed by Turgot in his "Second Discourse on the Gradual Progress of the Human Spirit." The point of view of Turgot and Condorcet was shared by Kant and also by St. Simon, whose dreams of the future carry him to Paradise itself. Cousin declares, in the concise and dictatorial manner he imitated from Hegel: "History is the development of humanity in space and time, and the conception of development includes the notion of progress." Auguste Comte frankly admits the fact of progress, with the reservation that it is no unmixed blessing. Its tragic aspect, to his mind, is the division of labor, which, while raising man above the animals, removes him from nature, and consigns him to dependence on an organized society, which leads to exploitation and other evils unknown among animals. Michelet sees the whole of history as a single, permanent progress towards freedom. Lubbock, Tyler, and J. S. Mill are

[1] "Théodicée," iii., § 341.

likewise convinced of progress; Buckle disbelieves in it in the moral sphere, but accepts it for science and knowledge.

It appears from this hasty review that the belief or disbelief in progress coincides with optimism and pessimism. Robust and practical people like the majority of Englishmen, gay, self-satisfied children of the world, masters of the art of life, like the French, in the period of enlightenment, see the world *au couleur de rose;* while phlegmatic dreamers and thinkers who live in a time of political oppression or suffer from heavy misfortunes of their own see it in a gloomy and hopeless light. One must then believe that progress or standstill have no objective existence, but are mere subjective experiences, dependent on the temperament of the observer, his youth or age, sickness or health. Were this correct, it would no longer be necessary to raise the question whether progress exists. It would be enough to establish that the constitution of human affairs appears to present different aspects at different times and in different places, all of which may be subjectively correct, while all are illusions without any real existence. It remains to be seen whether it be not possible to distinguish certain objective features in the changes of human condition, which would permit a judgment apart from arbitrary subjectivity, and allow the establishment of a general law applicable to such changes.

Before trying to obtain a rational answer to the question whether progress exists, it is necessary to be clear as to what is understood by progress. Almost everyone who approaches the conception gives it a different meaning, which accounts for their divergent judgments. As

a rule, the word "progress" includes the idea of an improvement. Paracelsus says, in the Preface to his "Great Surgical Remedies": "I dedicate this book to those to whom the new is worth more than the old, simply because it is new." The assumption, far from being self-evident, is in urgent need of proof. Why should the new be necessarily better than the old? It may very well be worse, and is, as a matter of fact, always considered by many to be worse. We have merely got another judgment of value as an exclusively subjective basis. We want to discover some objective mark of progress about which there can be no difference of opinion. Such a mark is found solely in the fact of change—or development, as it may be called—provided that development is not—as, for example, by Cousin—identified with progress, and therefore given a higher worth. We may adopt Herbert Spencer's definition of development as the increasing differentiation of a thing through the inclusion of new elements (integration) and the creation of new and more various forms. The creation of new forms need not be combined with the inclusion of new elements; it can accompany dissolution, the exclusion of old elements. Dissolution is thus as much a part of development as integration, and this should put us on our guard against regarding development as synonymous with progress in the sense of increasing worth.

The universe is never stationary; all is movement, πάντα ῥεῖ. Heraclitus put into words a fact always known to man. The transition from the establishment of eternal flux to the idea that, in the eternally changing picture, the last condition must always be more excellent

and perfect than the former, is due to naïve, unconscious anthropomorphism. The real idea floating at the back of the notions of progress and development in the ordinary mind, not only in the " common sense " so derided by philosophers, but among trained students of mental science, is something very remote from the Spencerian interpretation of differentiation advancing through integration. The motion is rather of an ideal form, an archetype towards which culture is developing. Did any such goal of development really exist, were there such an Idea, such an archetype, the question of progress would plainly be solved. We should have a standard by reference to which we could immediately decide whether one civilization stood higher than another. We should esteem our civilization as complete, and speak with certainty of its progress, in proportion as it closely resembled the Idea towards which its development was directed, and drew near to the ideal to which it was destined to attain. But this notion of the archetype arose from observation of human behaviour, and later of living matter as a whole. The child, small, weak, and imperfect at its birth, was seen gradually to grow, to develop, to blossom into young manhood or womanhood, and attain the beauty of maturity. There could be no doubt even in the rudimentary brain of primitive man that the new-born child did not represent a final form, but was predestined to grow to the full stature of a human being. Here, then, was a recognizable end, to which the changes of a definite creature were directed. The grown-up was the virtually existent model which the child gradually attained. Moreover, there could be no question that the grown-up realized

a higher and more perfect type than the child. Objectively he was more perfect, because he was in every respect more effective and independent; formally, too, because he satisfied the logical need of thought to see any movement, whose beginning and whole course is present to it in idea, carried to a determinate conclusion. Any halt short of this goal, or any deflection from the line thus laid down, causes disillusionment and revolt, while there is pleasure in the conformation of idea and realization. Here we have the schematic notion of progress. Man saw an actual evolution. He knew that it had a predestined goal. He was justified in regarding each new stage in development as a step towards that goal. Thus he naturally identified development with progress, and progress with improvement, and introduced into these conceptions a judgment of value. He then applied the scheme, formed from observation of human life, to animals and plants, to everything that appears incomplete, grows and ripens. He had a certain right to do so, inasmuch as the idea of a development that is at the same time a perfection does superficially apply to all living things as well as to man. But the apparently unexceptionable scheme contained fallacies which the human intellect was not yet critical enough to discover. The development of the living thing does not stop at maturity. It proceeds beyond it, and downwards. It leads to decay and death. It is arbitrary to see the rise and not the fall of the curve of development, the blossoming and ripening, and not the withering and dying down. The one is as regular and essential a part of the whole as the other. There is no justification for taking maturity as the archetypal

condition, for life moves on, through bloom and maturity alike, towards death. It is as correct to maintain, as Claude Bernard does without hesitation, that the goal of all life is death; that the archetype towards which every living thing is developing, which it is striving to realize, is the senile being, who dies and decomposes with the exhaustion of his vital forces. But a development leading with inexorable necessity to destruction cannot be identified with progress in the sense of perfection. The unconscious influence of these motives induces man to see the goal of human development in the individual at his best rather than in his shrunken old age. Firstly, from the utilitarian point of view, life is more effective at its highest point than at its end. Secondly, from the egoistic point of view, man is unwilling to accept the idea of development proceeding beyond his prime, because he finds more joy in his years of blossom than in those of decay, and would therefore like his development to remain stationary there, and proceed no farther. Last, but not least, he is influenced by the subdued ground tone of sex, which sounds in his ears in life's bloom, and dies away when it begins to decay. But the scheme of progress as improvement and increasing value, outlined from the observation of the phenomena of life, is incorrect, because it supplies no criterion of value for the different stages of life. If the æsthetic satisfaction of the looker-on is to decide, many will place the charm of childhood above the magic of youth, and most will prefer either to the solid virtues of maturity. If the degree of subjective pleasure is to be the standard, there can be no doubt that youth is preferable to maturity, although no thinker, however

casual, would take youth rather than maturity to be the goal of human development. Thus the very movement of life itself from one stage to the next, which suggested to men the notion of progress, does not, on closer examination, justify the identification of progress with improvement and increasing value.

And to transpose a scheme of progress based on the phenomena of life to the world as a whole is utterly false. Only the most naïve anthropomorphism could draw such an analogy. It premises that the universe possesses an ideal of its own perfection, related to it as maturity is related to infancy, and that it is developing, like the infant, towards this goal, this maturity of some sort. No single observed fact justifies the assumption that the universe is developing towards some riper, more complete form as its goal; on the contrary, all astrophysical observation compels the belief that in the universe determined processes follow regularly upon one another, and the heavenly bodies pass in permanent flux through a series of forms that dissolve into one another in an apparently immutable order. Primary vapour rotates, thickens, grows hot, and divides into sun and planets; these, originally fluid drops, harden; the system gradually spreads the heat that has drawn it together over the universe, then cools off and congeals, until, after long periods of time, it collides with other systems, and is thereby plunged into conflagration anew —Nova Persei occurs to the mind—melts, evaporates, and dissipates, and returns to primitive vapour, to be driven in a new direction, and, animated by an altered velocity, to begin the whole process again. We call this course of events the rising and setting of worlds, but

without a trace of objective justification. Nothing rises and nothing sets. Primary vapour is inspired by the same energy as the system of separate planets round a sun: the laws that determine the collision of two systems and their return to primary vapour are the same that regulate the formation of the solar and planetary system from primary vapour. The one state has the same dignity, the same value, as the other. Both are but different aspects of one and the same regular process. If the system of sun and planets represents real existence to us, and primary vapour chaos, and we regard the return of the system to primary vapour as its end, that is but another result of the unconscious egoism that dominates our thought. Because we live upon a planet, and do not find in primary vapour the conditions of our life, of the only life that is known to us, we regard the development of a system of sun and planets as the goal of all forces operative in the universe, and primary vapour as an end of all things and of all being. We make our life the criterion of the cosmic process, and, assigning high value to what is advantageous to it, and a low value to what is incompatible with it, shut our eyes to the fact that the world goes on its way without regard for us, and that all the forces in the universe are incessantly and regularly at work, whether mankind exist or no. Schopenhauer's argument that, since the world is eternal, every development must already have reached its goal within eternity, sufficiently proves the meaninglessness of the notion of development as applied to the world. The Spencerian formula is inadequate, since the course of cosmic conditions is neither differentiation, nor integration, nor dissociation,

but a continual movement, an eternal cycle whose rhythm is always the same. It is invalid to select certain sections of the cycle, certain periods of the rhythm, as being better, more complete. Individual periods are only better or more complete in reference to us, and if we cease to look at them in relation to ourselves, to humanity, and the processes of life, there is no longer any justification for assigning a higher value to the amalgamation of matter into spherical bodies than to their regular dispersion through vaporous space; or for seeing any superiority in a glowing sun and planets, capable of heat, and containing air and water, over an extinct sun and scorified planets without air or water.

The universe thus affords absolutely no place for development, and still less for progress, in the sense of gradual perfection. All known facts compel a reason which is closed against mystic reverie to assume an eternal, regular, cyclic movement perpetually passing through similar phases, and to reject as irrational the idea of a goal to which the earth is constantly progressing. The notion of progress, derived from the spectacle of the stages of living things, is strictly limited in its application to those living things. From the hedonistic standpoint, which regards pleasure as the only recognizable purpose of life, youth and early manhood, as the period of life which is richest in conscious feelings of pleasure, must be admitted to be the most beautiful in the existence of the individual, and development towards that stage recognized as a real progress, so far as conscious pleasure is concerned. At the same time we must be extraordinarily careful in extending

this point of view beyond the narrow limits of individual existence, and even in applying it to humanity as a whole. The hedonistic criterion here ceases to be valid. Humanity, as has been repeatedly pointed out in previous sections, is an abstraction; it is by a merely rhetorical simile that we look upon it as an individuality, a person passing through childhood, youth, maturity, and old age. Every man born and normally developed goes through the same periods of life; everyone knows childhood, youth, maturity, and grey hairs whether he lived at the first appearance of the species upon earth, lives to-day, or will live a million years hence. But there cannot be any special age of mankind characterized, as are the youth or old age of the individual, by feelings of pleasure or pain. We speak of happy or unhappy historical epochs, but that is a generalization that does not touch the individual. In the reign of Antoninus Pius, according to contemporary testimony one of the few halcyon ages recorded by the memory of man, there was sickness and death, and individuals must have complained and felt the misery of disease and old age. At the time of the Black Death and of the Thirty Years' War, probably the dreariest period in the last thousand years, there were young people who rejoiced in life and youth. No one historical epoch can be called happier than another, nor can the development from one to another be regarded as progress, from the hedonistic point of view.

If we are to hold to the notion of progress within the limits of human life, we must seek some other criterion than the hedonistic. For that purpose morality has often been suggested. It is maintained that, from

one generation to another, from one age to another, conscience becomes more subtle, sensitive, and clamant, sense of duty more profound and compelling, and horror of violence and injustice more immediate and pronounced. Unless it be held that the gradual transition from evil to good, from vice and crime to virtue, from indifference to love, consideration and pity for one's fellows, really represents no change from the point of view of worth, or even that it represents a deterioration of the human type by making it less efficient in the struggle for existence, this change must be admitted to be a development forwards and upwards—a progress.

But this moral criterion is uncertain. One objection occurs immediately, and has already been briefly indicated. From the social point of view the more moral man is doubtless more perfect than the less moral; the greater his consideration for his fellows—and that is what morality really amounts to when freed from its mystical wrappings—the more easy and pleasant are his relations with them. But the greater peace, the more restful comfort that may be acquired by this morality, may be bought too dear at the price of a diminution of his resolution, of his healthy egoism and his instinctive vitality—of all those characteristics whose maintenance is the condition of an enhanced and fully-developed personality. Advancing morality can thus be regarded as progress only if the ideal human development be social or not individual. This postulate is accepted by some, rejected by others. There are equally strong arguments both for and against. But, apart from the fundamental objection that advancing morality

does not necessarily denote progress from the anthropological, though it may from the social point of view, there remains the preliminary question whether the course of history does display such an increase in morality.

At the first glance it seems incontestable. Many of the enormities of earlier days have completely disappeared from civilized life. Cannibalism, which once prevailed all over the world, is now confined to the most backward of savage tribes. Prisoners of war are not tortured and killed nowadays, but treated honourably, and all their wants attended to. The stranger, instead of being an outlaw, is protected in every civilized State by treaties and the law. It is no longer possible for the mighty openly and with impunity to sacrifice the honour and life of the weak to their own whims. Crimes of violence are on the decline. The value of human life is more highly rated. None of these facts need be denied or questioned. But they are capable of various interpretations.

All comparisons between the present and any former stage of civilization rest upon statistics, which enumerate and index facts, but have no access to spiritual impulses and efforts. The fact that fewer acts are committed which the law regards as offences or crimes is not necessarily a proof of loftier morality. It may be a consequence of weakness of will and indolence. It may likewise be connected with the fact that in a better-ordered State there is more supervision, and every transgression is immediately discovered, tracked down, and punished, so that the individual walks in wholesome dread of an ever-watchful and present authority.

Within his consciousness, alone with his instincts and passions, civilized man is no more moral than the savage, and man to-day probably no different from man in the earliest Stone Age. In what way is the anarchist, who hurls a bomb regardless whether it tear women and children in pieces, superior to the wild warrior who fell upon the enemy at night, and butchered men, women, and children? The anarchist is admittedly inspired by what he holds to be a beautiful and glorious idea, but the wild slaughterer is likewise convinced that his action is splendid and heroic, and the bards of his race support him in this view by their panegyrics. Each follows his own impulse and satisfies himself, without a thought of those who are sacrificed. Is the speculative company promoter, who amasses hundreds of millions, robs thousands of families of their all in cold blood, and drives them to misery and despair, even to suicide, while he enriches himself with the fruits of their life's toil, any less guilty of robbery and butchery than the Sultan of Wadi-Halfa, who enslaved or executed the whole population of vast territories, and appropriated all their possessions? Does he feel any more consideration for his fellows than did the medieval Viking, who attacked the foreign coast with fire and sword, plunder and rapine? History records no enormity which cannot be paralleled in the near past or in the present. The most appalling atrocities of the French Jacquerie reappeared during the rising of the Esthnic and Lettish peasants in the East Russian provinces in 1906. The cruelties of the Armagnacs and extortioners during the Thirty Years' War were repeated in the Spanish wars of Napoleon, in the Kurdish raids against

the Armenians, and the incursions of the robber bands in Macedonia. Marius, whose acknowledgment or refusal of salutations when he entered Rome signified life or death, was no more blood-thirsty than Rosas in Argentine, Lopez in Paraguay, or Castro in Venezuela. The same evil spirits inhabit the soul of man to-day as in the days of our forefathers, hundreds and thousands of years ago. The chains that bind them are stronger; they are the ordinances of the State. But let them be once unfastened or even relaxed, and the demons will break out with cries as wild and rage as fearsome as of old. What, then, of moral progress? The crowd has a shrewd suspicion that there is no such thing. Every proverb, every popular saying, speaks of the past as a golden age, especially in morals, and praises the simple honesty and righteousness of their ancestors at the expense of the falsity and faithlessness of their descendants.

If we would estimate human progress, we must lay aside the criteria of happiness or morality; a third may serve us—that of technical invention. What a gap between the little oil-lamp and pinewood torch and electric light! between the kindling of fire by the tinder and by a match! between travelling on foot, horseback, or on a raft, and in the electric train or turbine steamer! between sending a message on foot and by means of telegraph and telephone! between the club and axe of stone and the revolver, machine-gun, torpedo, and armoured cruiser! Why prolong a recital that every educated man can complete for himself? Here, progress is undeniable. It certainly connotes no advance in morality; the master of all the technical inventions of

modern times is not necessarily any the better for them. They may, under certain circumstances, make it easier for him to satisfy his criminal selfishness. They do tempt him to abuse his superiority. As a matter of fact, each invention is the cause of new misdeeds that could not have been carried out at all, or not so easily, with less perfect instruments. Nor does it signify any enhancement of human happiness. Ignorance and indigence may permit man more subjective satisfaction than the most advanced civilization. It must be remembered that many inventions create, or at least increase and spread, the needs for which they provide elegant satisfactions; and therefore men, unaware of the needs thus met, did not suffer from them. Moreover, all the mechanical marvels of the present only provide a small minority with new pleasures from which the vast majority are excluded. The train *de luxe* which makes travelling a choice pleasure for the rich, carries the poor man only as stoker or brakeman, in which case he is little better off than the driver or postillion of the past. Bank-books and cheques make the management and use of money much more convenient than in the old days, when it had to be carried in a bag; but the man who has no money had no money-bag then, and knows nothing of bank-books and cheques to-day. It is unnecessary to pursue the relation of the many and the few into every invention. Not the whole of humanity, not even the whole of civilized peoples, profit even by those achievements whose influence extends far beyond their immediate effects. The mechanism of international trade to-day certainly prevents famine in any country so long as food is available for export from any other

spot on the surface of the globe. But in early days famine exercised its devastating sway only at long intervals, between which there were often considerable periods of superfluity; whereas to-day an excessive proportion of the population of our towns—the "submerged tenth" of the English economists—permanently suffer from famine, while the days of superfluity are now unknown. Details apart, it may be generally affirmed that morality and happiness or pleasure are in no sense dependent on technical invention. Men can be moral, and feel happy and content, in a condition of barbarism and ignorance, while the most profound moral depravity, a spiritual suffering to which death comes as a relief, and the extremity of brute wretchedness may accompany all the wonders of mechanical science and the most advanced contest over steam and electricity. If, then, some who despise the world and have mastered life refuse to technical progress any value for humanity, and even deny it recognition as progress at all, the point of view, paradoxical as it may seem at a first glance, can readily be defended.

But if doubt is possible as to the immediate advantage of inventions and discoveries to the great majority of mankind, one thing is not open to doubt or to argument—that they are at once the result and the proof of a wider and more profound knowledge. And here at last we have a real criterion of progress, and one which enables us to establish the existence, not simply of mere movement, entitling us to pass no judgment of value, nor of a mere change in the relation of man to nature, but of progress itself.

Since civilization began men have been incessantly perfecting their method of observing and recording phenomena, in order to penetrate more deeply into their connection and comprehend their laws. The transition from the blackest ignorance to clearer and more extensive knowledge may have been quicker or slower, more or less limited in its range; but it has hitherto never stood still. No single invention of utility to man has ever been lost, no single truth worth knowing ever forgotten after it has once been learned. There is something quite visionary in the notion now and then met with which ascribes to certain classes in earlier times, such as the Egyptian priests, or to individuals, like the adept of the Middle Ages and the eighteenth century, a secret knowledge that was buried with them. The temples at Thebes were not lit by electric light; the statues of the Gods did not speak to believers through phonographs; no one ever possessed the philosopher's stone, which gave him eternal youth and transmuted all metals in gold; until our own day no one knew of X rays or radium. Only the invincible attraction of the marvellous induced men to invent and believe these fairy-tales. Thus, Aristarchus was credited with knowledge of the Copernican system which was not really discovered till fifteen hundred years later. In this and many other cases a brilliant suspicion is confused with the clear insight and stern logic of proof. To search through ancient authors for indications of inventions not made till thousands of years later may be an amusing pastime; it is, however, completely sterile to discover, for example, a description of movable type in Cicero; of the air balloon and flying-machine in Leonardo da

Vinci and Cyrano de Bergerac; in others of photography, telegraphy, and the telephone. In the *Opus Majus* of Roger Bacon alone decided forecasts are found of gunpowder, the telescope, the air-pump, the air-ship, the diving-bell, the suspension bridge, the steamer, and the locomotive.[1] Waggish interpreters have ascribed the destruction of the people of Korah to the explosion of a powder or dynamite mine, and interpreted the trumpets before which the walls of Jericho fell down as cannon; Elijah's chariot of fire as a locomotive or automobile; and the myth of Dædalus and Icarus as the story of the first kite-flier. This, however, is not serious. Man's needs have always aroused the wish for satisfaction; that wish was the father of ideas, and a lively imagination soon raised fabulous pictures of imaginary ways of satisfying the need. The difficulty is, however, to step from the playful activity of the imagination, acting under the stimulus of some need or longing, to the creation of something real; from juggling with ideas to making some definite technical invention or scientific discovery. He who takes the step has nothing in common with the dreamers who went before him, save the need that spurred both on. The step once taken, the ground thus won can never be lost again.

It was natural that when the intellect awoke after the long night of the Middle Ages, after a thousand years of feudal barbarism, a dispute should arise as to whether permanent progress existed or no. In the famous literary war at the end of the seventeenth cen-

[1] Frédéric de Rougemont, "Les deux cités," Paris, 1874, vol. i., p. 449.

tury, into which Boisrobert, Lamotte, Perrault, Terrason, and others entered with spirit,[1] Perrault tried to explain the undeniable fact of the disappearance, throughout many centuries, of all the knowledge of Greece and Rome by a comparison with rivers that will suddenly seem to be dried up, although they do, as a matter of fact, continue their course underground, and appear again in full force at some remote spot.[2] The comparison, though striking, is not really applicable. Knowledge once acquired is not swallowed up by the earth, nor does it continue to exist beneath it. A teacher hands it on to his scholars; sons learn it from their fathers, just as they do in the time when knowledge flourishes, or, to use Perrault's image, when the stream flows above ground. Those who tend real, certain knowledge are never numerous; at a time when barbarism is supreme they may be fewer than usual. But the type could only die out were it confined to a single spot and to a single class there, which was exterminated at the first encounter with some wild foreign conquerer. In this way the conquistadors butchered those who tended the knowledge of Mexico and Peru, before any relations had been established between them such as would have enabled any communication or exchange of knowledge to be made. But in the course of history no such case has occurred within the white or yellow races who have created and tended our civilization. All that has been acquired has therefore always been maintained; the confines of our knowledge have always extended, never

[1] Hippolyte Rigaut, "Histoire de la querelle des anciens et des modernes," Paris, 1856.

[2] Perrault, "Parallèle des anciens et des modernes," Paris, 1688.

closed in, and the progress of knowledge has been constant.

Knowledge denotes the comprehension by the understanding of the ordered combination and course of phenomena. Intuition and supposition may lead to knowledge, by rousing and directing the attention, but they are not in themselves knowledge. It can only be acquired by the aid of observation consciously directed by the will, in rare and exceptional cases by involuntary apprehension, or even by unconscious sense impression. Consciousness probably enters into the origin of what is vaguely designated by the word "instinct," in so far as it is not a case of mere tropism. Extremely complicated movements, such as swimming, fencing, or playing the pianoforte, which must originally have required the greatest attention and a sustained and conscious exercise of will for their order and co-ordination, are shown to be capable of an automatism into which consciousness, attention, and will no longer enter. At the same time it is impossible not to conclude that every instance of this automatism—every instinct, in a word—has originated in actions directed by will to some purpose existing in idea, is the outcome of organized attention. At the moment of the completion of this organization by the nerve-centres consciousness is called up by the summons of instinct; and instinct is certainly not knowledge. At the best, it may be a source of knowledge when consciousness, to some extent a looker-on at the manifestations of its own instinctive life, is at a given moment aroused by curiosity out of the dull acceptance of the usual and stimulated to ask the cause and purpose of the instinctive action. In every case

then, knowledge premises an operation of the consciousness which observes phenomena with the aid of the attention, and combines its perceptions by means of interpretation and judgment into connected ideas. The more alert and sustained the attention, the more accurate and complete is observation, and the closer the correspondence of the ideas and judgments with the phenomena on which they are based; the more real, in a word, will be the knowledge. Knowledge progresses as the reality of its content increases. If, not satisfied with the result, it is desired to investigate the mechanism by which it is obtained, the matter must be put thus: Progress is an increase in the capacity to set attention in action artificially, and to sustain it by the exclusion of distracting objects. In other words, progress, in the last resort, is the development of the force and endurance of the human will, expressed in the intellectual spheres of attention and inhibition. The function of the latter is to restrain the trains of new ideas that are, under the stimulus of sense impressions and association, continually trying to force their way into the consciousness, so long as it is directed to a definite field of observation, and to complete and logically develop the results obtained from it.

It follows, from the definition of progress as an increase of knowledge by an extension of its real elements of its content, that the imagination, which disposes of the elements of reality at its own arbitrary pleasure, and makes no claim to the exact representations of phenomena, can play no direct part in progress. Art, too, as the creation of the imagination, is equally invalid as a criterion of progress. Therefore it was an

error to try to solve the question of progress by a comparison of ancient and modern works of art, as was attempted in the famous strife of old and new in the seventeenth century. Nothing is proved for or against progress by placing Homer above Dante, Tasso, and Milton; Sophocles above Shakespeare and Schiller; Phidias above Michael Angelo; Zeuxis above Raphael, or *vice versa*. The spheres of imagination and of knowledge do overlap, but not coincide. Probably human imagination was more fertile at the beginning than later on.[1] The scanty knowledge then possessed by man could neither consciously nor unconsciously rein in the wild and tumultuous course of his unbridled imagination. Its gambols, spurred on and guided solely by need, desire, and longing, must have been extraordinarily pleasurable, because they corresponded fully to the organic appetites and flattered them. Fantasy, hardly impeded by the attention, which was as yet but little developed artificially, and limited by no consideration of reality, known or unknown, dominated the whole realm of brain activity, and developed with a luxuriance never found in the disciplined reason and trained observation of civilized man, except when his mental balance is disturbed by disease and he raves under the influence of acute mania, or of alcohol, opium, hashish, or other poisons. No poetic invention of later times comes up to the myths and fables of antiquity in vividness and wealth of astonishing incident; and even to-day the fairy-tales of savage races are far superior to the

[1] J. B. Vico, "Nuova Scienza," second edition, Naples, 1730, book i., chap. ii.: "In the childhood of the world men must naturally have been sublime poets."

artistic inventions of the same sort among civilized peoples. Progress clips the wings of Pegasus or narrows the space for his flight. The need of being careful in his movements spoils his glorious turbulence and the beauty of his unfettered soaring.

The progress of knowledge has only been indirectly of advantage to art, by placing at the disposal of the imagination a greater wealth of reliable ideas, and demanding, side by side with the development of a sense of reality, an increased co-operation of critical reason, and the logical faculty in the creative work of the fancy. Yet it is very likely that the productions of instructed artists may possess far less of that power of suggestion, on which their æsthetic effect wholly depends, than those of much more ignorant creators. They believed [1] in the inventions of their fantasy, while the moderns stand outside of them and regard them as merely so much intellectual construction. No modern could emulate the naïve creations of antiquity, such as the hybrid centaurs, sphinxes, satyrs, griffins, harpies, etc., or permit the Gods to interfere in human destiny after the fashion of Homer and the tragedians. How unconvinced, and therefore unconvincing, is the treatment of the supernatural in Tasso's "Jerusalem"! How difficult it is for the modern reader to make anything of Shakespeare's witches and apparitions! They cannot possibly inspire terror, because the poet obviously does not really believe in them himself.

For what purpose does man make the severe effort to strengthen his will, sustain and sharpen his attention,

[1] "Fingunt simul credunt" (Tacitus).

control the aimless association of his ideas, and introduce more and more reality into those ideas—in a word, to acquire more, more certain and more comprehensive knowledge? For the one great purpose of all life—an easier and more perfect adaptation to the natural conditions of existence.

Progress is assuredly movement towards a goal, but this goal is not mystical, has not been conceived by a supernatural spirit, or determined by a supernatural will; it is throughout earthly, concrete, immanent, the same for all life—it is self-preservation. Progress in knowledge permits all the resources of nature that can be used by man to be more profitably employed, the evils and dangers that threatened him to be more frequently avoided, pleasure to be increased, discomfort lessened, and the average duration of life to be prolonged. The immediate effect of increased knowledge is purely utilitarian and biological. Indirectly it is psychological and moral. It increases self-reliance in man, and gives him a rising sense of his own dignity. It rouses resistance to selfish domination, tutelage, exploitation. When a man has reached the stage at which he sees that every assertion, instead of being blindly accepted, should be subjected to the critical examination of the reason and compared with the facts of experience, he no longer believes that some men are born with a right to live by the labour of their fellows, and others with the duty of toiling for their advantage; and he refuses to part with the fruits of his efforts except in exchange for useful and desirable services. More perfect attention and stronger will power enable him to fix one thought more lastingly, and to maintain it against the attack upon the conscious-

ness of distracting associations; to develop it consequentially, and pursue its ramifications; to form judgments in which the causes and effects of phenomena are followed up in close harmony with reality. Therefore he becomes more and more capable of penetrating the multitudinous and often exceedingly cunning disguises of exploiting parasitism, and defending himself effectually against the sycophants who are hidden in the background of old and honourable institutions, or crowd up to him under the masks of patrons, protectors, and helpers, and slip their clever fingers in his pockets. Villa [1] has correctly pointed out that men always aim at near goals because they do not see or know distant ones. But progress consists in a sharpening of their intellectual sight that will permit them to fix their gaze on more and more distant goals, and to penetrate and disentangle increasingly complex conditions.

Increasing knowledge, moreover, involves a higher value for personality, and a limitation and restriction of parasitism. More and more the individual realizes himself as an end, and pays less and less attention to sounding sophistries that declare it to be a duty, and at the same time a virtuous and heroic act, to allow himself to be abused by others. At an early stage of development recognized morality is summed up in the Horatian epigram, "Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori." How should it not be "sweet and honourable to die for one's country" when, as Plato teaches in the "Republic," the individual is nothing, the State—that is, the country—all? Not only the State, to which one can always assign some moral greatness, but the privileged

[1] Guido Villa, "L'idealismo moderno," Turin, 1905, pp. 205 *et seq.*

and upper class within the State. Lucan [1] expresses this with incomparable brutality: "The Gods have never demeaned their providence to the level of your life, your death (the common people). The people all imitate the movement of the upper class. Mankind lives for the advantage of the few." Later moralists and philosophers cynically laid bare the inner meaning of such unctuous morality when they placed the ruler in the place of the State. Thus Alberic Gentilis called the power of kings over their peoples a natural, necessary, unconditional, primitive right, like that of the father over his children. This, in an Italian educated in the traditions of classical education, is obviously a reminiscence of the Twelve Tables: "Patri familias ius vitæ et necis in liberos esto"—"The father shall have the right of life and death over his children"—supplemented by the more practical "Quidquid filius acquirit, patri acquirit"—"Whatever the son acquires, he acquires for his father."

Hobbes gave his views an even harsher form. He held peace to be the highest good, and freedom its greatest enemy. In it he saw the source of all evil, and regarded despotism as the only means of stopping it, with the Church as an instrument for the maintenance of order. What a chasm between the views of Plato, Gentilis, or Hobbes and those of Höffding,[2] who esti-

[1] "Pharsalia," Lib. V., v., 342 *et seq.*:

> ". . . Numquam sic cura decorum
> Se premit, ut vestræ morti, vestræque saluti
> Fata vacent. Procerum motus hæe cuncta sequuntur
> Humanum paucis vivit genus."

[2] Harald Höffding, "Filosofiske Probleme," Kopenhagen, 1902, p.

mates the moral worth of a society by the extent to which it regards the individual, not merely as a means, but an end! Or, to take other milestones, between the "L'état, c'est moi" of Louis XIV. to Frederick the Great's "I am the first servant of the State" and the "Declaration of the Rights of Man." I do not propose to enter into modern anarchism, which sees in the State the systematized exploitation of the many by a privileged class; in the idea of country, with its poetic imagery, a cunning speculation on the part of this class for trading on the easy sentimentality of the unthinking; and in the man without property, a man who, having no country and no interest in the State, would be a fool to make the smallest sacrifice in defence of the privileges of those who exploit him. Such views must appear abominably immoral, even criminal, when judged by a morality developed from the order established by a privileged class. Crude and undeveloped as they are, however, they contain the outlines of the morality of a new order—an order in which the individual recognizes himself as an end, brands all exploitation as a crime, and regards as a revolting and unnatural immorality any suggestion that he should sacrifice himself to an end outside himself, in whatever flattering name that end may be dressed up.

Increasing knowledge has one consequence that is apparently—but only apparently—directed against individual autonomy and the sovereignty of personality.

74 (trans. Galen M. Fisher, New York, 1905, p. 163): "The test of the perfection of a human society . . . is, to what degree is every person so placed and treated that he is not only a mere means, but also always at the same time an end?"

Man's greater insight teaches him that his fellow-men are unequal by nature; that there are among them strong and weak, armed and unarmed; and that it is not easy for the former to resist the temptation to misuse their natural superiority at the expense of the less favourably endowed. Gradually his intelligence discovers a means of protection against the attacks of the strong in the organized combination of the middling. It is the awakened self-consciousness of the individual which determines him to sacrifice a portion of his independence by freely entering a community and submitting to limitations on his freedom, in order to save himself by the small sacrifice thus voluntarily imposed from being reduced to the condition of a slave or chattel by the powerful parasites whom he could not resist in isolation. At the beginning, even in this systematic union of the middling for mutual protection, inequality plays its part. Even here the superior leader comes to the front, and compels others to gather round him, in accordance with his views, by the weight of his personality, by persuasion, command, or threats. It is a psychological process practically not very different from that by which the chieftains in early and very early times gathered their following about them; but its end is the exact opposite. The superior man gathers his companions about him, not for attack, but for defence; not to exploit, but to protect them. The end itself has an educative effect on the community, and soon the most limited and least independent of its members sees why he belongs to it; that he is, in it, an equal among equals; that it safeguards his freedom and his independence. Thus, in the common social life of man, progress con-

sists in the gradual education of conscious, voluntary citizenship. Exploitation becomes more and more difficult, until at last it becomes impracticable either by force or cunning. Anyone who creates value will exchange it only for equal value. Symbiosis takes the place of parasitism.

The biological significance of this is that over a wide area progress brings the human species into the same relation to nature as all other living species. They adapt their structure to the conditions of their environment, or, if they fail, succumb. Within the species the position of the individual relative to his environment is the same: each has to struggle for survival with his own means, and death is the inexorable penalty of incapacity. The position of the human species alone was, as we have seen, originally different. Their structure was not adapted to their environment. For hundreds of thousands of years they endeavoured to adapt themselves to it, undertaking that adaptation, not throughout their organism, but solely by their brains, with the help of observation, invention, judgment, and knowledge. Within the human species a great inequality in method of adaptation developed itself as between individuals. The more efficient, following the law of least effort, employed the convenient and productive method of parasitism at the expense of their less well-equipped fellows, on whom alone fell the hard labour of extracting from nature the means of subsistence of the whole species. Gradually, however, the human species rendered the conditions of its hostile environment favourable to itself by artificial means, and individuals, instead of practising parasitism, were able to take direct advantage of the

favourable conditions of existence artificially created by common exertion. Completed adaptation, then, is seen, on the one hand, in the alleviation of human existence in the midst of hostile nature, and, on the other, in the penalization of parasitism by the increased power of self-protection; so that the law of least effort no longer compels the most powerful individuals necessarily to take recourse to parasitism.

Thus we have obtained an exhaustive answer to the question of progress. The notion of progress has application and meaning only for humanity. There can be no progress in the universe. The eternity of the world, and the absence of any end from which such progress could acquire significance, exclude it. In an eternal universe human thought can only discern eternal motion in a cycle or cycles, of which all the periods possess the same worth and significance. We cannot speak of progress within the solar and planetary system, or even in the orders of living creatures. There is no objective—that is to say, non-human—ground for assigning higher worth in the universe to a globe with a hard crust than to a drop of molten fluid, or less to a completely scorified and frozen orb than to our planet in its present or primitive condition. Were any difference to be made as between such conditions, the primitive drop of molten fluid must rank above the stiff-crusted orb and the ball of ice, inasmuch as all the electric, chemical, and mechanical properties of energy must undoubtedly have more powerful, free, and varied play in the form of drops than later, when, its processes becoming slow, they cool off into globes. Nor are we entitled to generalize from the development of the unicellular organ-

ism and apply to strongly differentiated plants and animals descriptive terms such as "advance" and "progress," which suggest a judgment of value. On the contrary, it could be very well maintained that the simplest living creatures are more perfect than the more complicated, because they are more capable of resistance to hostile environment, more successful in maintaining themselves, in spite of unfavourable circumstances, and are practically immortal, since, instead of dying of their own inherent weakness, they can only be destroyed by the chance action of some external power. With naïvely unconscious bias we have taken humanity and human life as our standard of value, and test the worth of all things, beings, and conditions by it. The more closely any being resembles man, the more favourable any condition is for human life, the higher is the value we assign to them, and we conceive of their end as lying in resemblance to man, becoming favourable to his existence, and speak of development in that direction as progress. On such grounds we esteem the development of the planetary system from primary vapour, the cooling of the primary drop to form the habitable globe, the differentiation of the unicellule into mollusc, worm, vertebrate, warm-blooded animal, and mammal, as an advance in the scale, as a movement towards perfection, as progress. Such a view is based on an anthropomorphic illusion which cannot stand against scientific criticism.

Even within the human race progress is hardly to be thought of as regards the fundamental characteristics of human nature and human life. Human memory is very far from perfect, and it has very probably become less

powerful since it began to help itself out by means of writing. Nor has man become happier. On the contrary, the preponderance of intellect over emotion causes him to create imaginary evils, and prevents him from enjoying the pleasures he possesses with the old reckless glee. Nor can man to-day be said to be better than his distant—even than his most distant—ancestors. He has only learned to conceal his selfishness and his unsympathetic hardness towards his fellows or to disguise it as love of his kind. The point remains in which real progress is visible in the domain of will. The total energy of the human will has possibly not increased; it is certainly no longer displayed, as among barbarians, in violent ebb and flow, in the wild and sudden outbursts of extreme and transitory exaltation that give rise to deeds of heroism. But it is regular, disciplined, and sustained, and therefore far more adapted for regular and productive employment than the wild, untamed force of primitive man. The one is like a canal that drives mill-wheels and supplies the driving-power of electric turbines; the other is a mountain burn, that generally trickles along in a tiny streamlet, or dries up altogether, but sometimes comes down with fury, tearing up rocks, and laying waste woods in its course. When the will is thus disciplined, even if its energy be not increased, it permits the attention to be concentrated and sustained, phenomena to be observed with more fruitful results, a further tracing of their causal connection, and anticipation of their consequences, judgments to be formed and conclusions reached of a more thoroughly logical kind. The result is that the sense of reality becomes more acute; the ideas cover a wider range, present

and future; and knowledge is extended, while its basis becomes more secure. In the last resort knowledge assists man to establish himself more readily within the natural order, provide himself with more favourable conditions of existence, and satisfy his instinct of self-preservation more completely. Knowledge is thus adaptation on the intellectual side, and progress the return more and more to that relation to his environment in which man found himself before the first Ice Age—a stage that may be called paradisical. In other words, progress is the artificial re-creation of the favourable conditions of life no longer provided by nature, and the extension of those conditions, not to favoured individuals alone, but to the average man.

Such a conclusion, such an answer, to the question of progress will, no doubt, be to many not only disappointing, but positively revolting. "What!" they will cry, "is progress to result merely in returning us to that condition now enjoyed from birth on by every animal and plant species that flourishes on the earth? Have hundreds of thousands of years of exertion brought us no more advantage than a share of the privileges of the smallest bacillus? Is this all we have attained through a knowledge that takes the universe for its province, and tells us the secrets of the matter, condition, and movement of the first cosmic vapour; through all our discoveries, our inventions—that we may live our little life and no more, and not live it so happily as did our remotest ancestors, who enjoyed a soft, warm air, that freed them from the need of shelter, fire, and clothing, and food that could be plucked from

every tree? Is all this toil and labour to go for such a miserable end? Mere life cannot possibly be worth this huge, incessant expense of spirit!"

The indignation of wounded self-esteem cannot do away with the humiliating truth. The objective worth of human life, from a superhuman point of view, we cannot know. To mankind it has hitherto always seemed a good of the highest value, although Schiller maintained the contrary, and may have been right in exceptional individual cases. Self-preservation has always seemed the best use to which force and capacity could be put. Life feels itself as an end, and is satisfied therewith. Poets and thinkers have denied it. They have declared that some exertions are not worth while. Martial maintained that it was the greatest mistake "propter vitam vivendi perdere causus"—to lose the causes for living for the sake of life. He maintained, that is to say, that life has causes that lie outside and above it. Eighteen centuries later Georg Simmel expresses the same view when he finds the cause of the unrest, discontent, and vague yet painful longings of the present to lie in the fact that in the complexity of modern civilization and the extent to which the division of labour has been carried the individual, divorced from the purpose or utility of his work, feels his existence to be empty and meaningless, and is discontented with his life and with himself. These are brilliant ideas that occur as one sits at one's desk. They are not drawn from contemplation of the spectacle of actual human life. The sense of life is pleasurable in itself, and affords in itself a satisfaction that is sufficient stimulus to the living to cling to it at any price. Not until the

tide of life in the organism begins to ebb, and the chemical and physical processes connected with life begin to circulate more slowly and less smoothly through the cells, does kinæsthesis cease to be pleasurable and begin to contain elements of positive pain, which overpower, and finally suppress, the others. Then, and only then, does the reason, stimulated by subconscious feelings of distress, begin to question the end of existence and the meaning of its own activity.

To philosophize about the meaning and purpose of life, in so far as it is an inward impulse, and not mere imitation or intellectual gymnastic, is the sign of ill-humour or weakness, sickness or old age. A man in the plentitude of his strength, who has a good appetite for his meals several times a day, loves his wife passionately, and finds joy in his growing children, and pleasure in the opening buds of spring, never asks himself whether these feelings and impulses and their satisfaction make life worth living and justify its existence. He does not seek for any hidden meaning and purpose in life, but finds both completely satisfied in the immediate sensations of the moment. Even the incomprehensibility of organized labour in a civilized community, and the intellectual nullity of the function performed by any individual under a far-reaching division of labour, does not spoil the temper of the worker, or fill him with painful doubt as to purpose and worth of his existence. If Georg Simmel had studied popular wisdom, he would have come upon a French proverb: "Il n'y a pas de sot métier, il n'y a que de sottes gens"—"There is no stupid trade, only stupid people." To the plain man every occupation seems right and rational which pro-

vides him and his with bread and butter. So long as it be sufficiently lucrative, he does not trouble as to its significance to the community as a whole. Speculation as to the meaning and purpose of life is a function of the reason, while the instinct of life and the joy in life are feelings that arise and continue outside of the reason, and uninfluenced by it.

The question as to the meaning and purpose of the life of man and of humanity belongs to the same order as the questions as to the meaning and purpose of the universe as a whole, and the origin, goal, and end of the world-processes, which give rise to fantastic ravings, but admit of no rational answer. So long as we keep our eyes fixed on reality, and, instead of running off after will-o'-the-wisps, submit to the guidance of facts, the conclusion is inevitably forced upon us that the one object of the endeavours of historic and prehistoric men has been self-preservation. They observed, investigated, thought, struggled towards knowledge, invented and discovered, in order that their lives might be safer, easier, and better, and they themselves obtain a larger share of pleasure. They founded States, organized societies, created institutions, customs, habits, and laws, waged wars, conquered, and stirred up revolutions, in order at first to satisfy the needs of superior individuals fully, and with least trouble to themselves, by sacrificing to them the crowd of average persons, and, later, in order to confine the parasitism of these superior beings within ever-narrower limits, and to secure to the average man, to an even greater extent, the enjoyment of the fruits of his own labour. The self-preservation of humanity against hostile nature on the one hand, and the

assimilation of the claims of the average and the superior individuals to the enjoyment of life within humanity on the other—this is the goal and object of progress. Those who have helped it on have always been engaged in some immediate concrete task. The vague search for a goal of progress, postulated to lie outside of the existence of the species, belongs to dreams, not to knowledge, and those who have busied themselves with weaving this dream and dressing it out in beautiful language have had no share in progress. At best they are the musicians who accompany its course with rhythmic measures.

Progress has always advanced in the same way throughout the course of human history. We have seen that it consists in a widening and deepening of knowledge. This is the work of the few. Civilization is developed in the brains of exceptional men endowed with more than common powers of thought and will, keen and sustained attention, comprehensive consciousness, manifold associations, and an alert sense of reality—in a word, with unusual energy in the brain-cells. The causes that retard corporate advance in knowledge do not affect such men: they have no superstitious reverence for tradition, no hatred of the new as such. The world is more to them than books are; they listen to the voice of nature rather than to any teacher; and thus acquire from events and their connection perceptions that are new and personal. All the views, discoveries, and inventions that represent a better adaptation of the species to the natural conditions of its existence are their work. They are the true heroes of human history, not the six categories distinguished by Carlyle—the deified tribal

patriarch, the prophet, poet, priest, man of letters, and king.[1] Hero-worship directs itself to these categories, it is true, and not to the silent genius whose creation is for the most part accomplished in solitary obscurity, who is during his lifetime almost always misunderstood, if not unknown, and who hardly ever sees his exertions bear fruit, so that he may have any share in the enjoyment of them.

The definition given of great men by Carlyle in "Sartor Resartus" is mere mystic talk. "They are the inspired (speaking and acting) texts of that Divine Book of Revelations, whereof a chapter is completed from epoch to epoch, and by some named History." Vico [2] sees the truth much more accurately when he says, of the heroes: "They were in the highest degree rough, wild, of most limited intellect, but of vast imagination and the most ardent passions, and as the result of these characteristics they must have been barbaric, cruel, harsh, wild, proud, difficult to manage, and obstinate in whatever they set before themselves." Current history is for the most part confined to heroes of Vico's type, to whom Carlyle would likewise have accorded some measure of worship. They rivet the attention of contemporaries, whose accounts transmit their wonder to

[1] Thomas Carlyle, "On Heroes and Hero Worship, and the Heroic in History," six lectures reported, with emendations and additions. Thomas Carlyle, "Sartor Resartus," London, Ward Lock and Co., p. 120.

[2] "Cinque libri di Giambattista Vico de' principj d'una scienza nuova d'intorno alla commune natura della nazioni," Second impression, Naples, 1730, p. 320: "Gli eroi . . . erano in sommo grado goffi, fieri, di cortissimo intendimento, di vastissime fantasie, di violentissime passioni; per lo ettes que doveltei essere zotici, crudi, aspri, fieri, orgogliosi, difficili ed ostinati ne'lor propositi."

posterity. They provide the melodrama of history—wars, conquests, revolutions. To them is assigned the making of the map, the foundation, limitation, and alteration of States, and the origin of constitutions and laws. They are regarded as embodiments of the endeavours and accomplishments of a nation or epoch. But behind these brilliant and boisterous figures are the students, engaged on the real, slow work of adaptation to which human existence is due. They are the educators of mankind in Lessing's sense. The knowledge they acquire becomes common property of subsequent generations. In it the youth are brought up while they are still able to learn, before they are petrified in habits which resist everything new. The effect of this gradual extension of the circle of vision of the masses of people, who could never discover new truths for themselves, is that natural resources are better used and the worth of the individual increased.

Mighty parasites do nothing for the extension of knowledge—that is, for progress. But their clear-eyed selfishness makes them appropriate all discoveries and inventions that can be of advantage to them by making it easier for them to exploit the weak. It is their part to translate the intellectual results of the students into actual practical reality. They therefore endeavour to gain a monopoly of these results, but cannot prevent the use and knowledge of them spreading in the course of time. Thus, unconsciously, they are arming the weak against themselves, and making their exploitation more and more difficult for themselves, with the result that, within a measurable time, parasitism will become impossible for all but the very strongest human types, for

those of the most powerful will, greatest cunning and depravity.

Humanity lives by its men of genius; but they do not live by it. Humanity gives them no more than any other of its members, and incomparably less than it gives the exploiting parasite. It is natural that this should be felt to be somewhat unjust and ungrateful, but the sentiment—a simple religious reflex—arises from the same source as the primeval worship of the sun, the phallic ritual and the service of all the beneficial forces of nature. It makes no difference to the sun, which sustains all the life upon earth, whether or no we are grateful, the motive of our gratitude being partly the desire to keep it in a shining humour. It radiates light and warmth without knowing or intending it, and since it sacrifices nothing for us, we are under no moral obligation to be grateful. Creative genius does not discover or invent with the same unconsciousness as the sun, but any intention of giving happiness to the human race is as far from one as from the other. Consideration for humanity and the thought of benefiting it play no part in stimulating genius. When a new truth has been discovered, then, and not till then, this consideration may occur, on reflection. But the motive powers of that genius are those common to all men—need, whether higher or lower, that is to say, more or less generalized or differentiated; the desire for knowledge, which is a more powerful instrument in their hands than in those of the average man, and the demand for self-advantage and personal gain. He has no moral claim to the gratitude of others, and his reward is in the satisfaction inherent in the attainment of the goal he has set before

himself. And there is a further consideration: no man of genius creates by his own means alone. He is heir to the labour of the men of genius who have gone before him, without whom his existence would be impossible. He receives on his entry into life an inheritance which he puts out to interest and increases. Thus those who have advanced the human race form a spiritual family, and transmit their acquired knowledge from generation to generation. They form a special genealogical succession, elevated above the average. They are, as it were, a species within the species, a human organism differentiated for a special function. All the compulsory institutions of State and society, created by Vico's "Eroi," to satisfy their own parasitic needs, form a framework into which every individual must fit, whether he will or no, if he be not strong enough to burst it or adapt it to his purposes. The imprisonment does not necessarily bring him into any closer relationship with those who share it. It is quite false to regard the apparent unity presented by a nation or species, as a result of this merely external pressure, as organic, as is done by Schäffle, Lilienthal, Gumplovicz, Durckheim, Worms, etc. Knowledge, on the other hand, does really unite the individuals who partake of it in an intellectual and moral bond. It gives to all without taking from any. It equips man for the struggle of existence, with an implement artificially adapted for the purpose, such as he could never have forged for himself, such as he could gain only by entrance to the community. Any individual member of a community that does not share in its acquired knowledge is like a blind or deaf man, or a fledgling without wings. He who does possess it

has inherited it, like his physical stature and his inborn characteristics, from the generations who have gone before, with whom and with his fellow-men he is organically related by its means.

The effect of progress is thus apparently contradictory. On the one hand it renders the individual more independent and more capable of maintaining himself against his fellows; on the other hand, it unites individuals in a combination beneficial to them all, whose dissolution would leave them less developed and less well equipped. Both effects are, however, but different aspects of a progressive adaptation to the given conditions of existence.

CHAPTER IX

ESCHATOLOGY

THE English saying, "Don't prophesy unless you know," affords a really exhaustive definition of the relation of human knowledge to the future. But so incessant and so strong is man's desire to penetrate the vast region of the unknown, that any visionary with the gift of words who plays the seer and indulges in absurd prophecies will find listeners ready to believe with all their souls. It was religion that first emphasized eschatology. It was, indeed, always its strongest attraction, side by side with the protection that it claimed to afford against all the evils by which man was threatened. With the same audacious confidence with which it informed them of the final causes and destiny of the world, it revealed all the secrets of the future. The Kathaka-Upanishad relates that the Brahman Naciketas descended into the kingdom of the dead, in order, unmoved by all the promises of transitory felicity, to wrest from the God of Death the knowledge of what lies beyond the grave.[1] Buddhism teaches its followers that the world returns to nothingness, in order to rise out of nothingness to a new cycle of existence. The Zend Avesta describes the Paradise of Light which is

[1] Hermann Oldenberg, "Buddha: His Life, Teaching and Followers," Berlin, 1881, p. 57.

the eternal abode of the righteous. The religion of the Northern Germans is less optimistic: it envisages the conflagration of the world and the twilight of the Gods —that is to say, the fearful destruction of all that is. The prophets of Israel, instead of pointing to a hereafter, give a sufficiently joyous picture of the future state of existence here, where the sword is made into a ploughshare, and the wolf and the lamb lie down together. Christianity prophesies the Last Judgment, the Resurrection of the Dead, and the kingdom of God upon earth. Islam promises to the faithful an eternal life, with all the pleasures of the flesh. The psychological explanation of all these dreams is simple: they arise from a desire. The wish is father to these thoughts. Man is afraid of death. He would like to live in happiness for ever. This desire, in the imagination of excited mystics, takes the form of a premonition, a vision, a promise, and religion authenticates it.

Geologists, too, and astronomers have followed in the track of theologists on to the unsure ground of eschatology. In doing so, they cease to be scientific, for in this field there are no certainties, only possibilities—or, at the best, probabilities. Most of them have prophesied that our planet will be turned to ice or to the scorified conditions of the moon, through the chemical combination of air and water; others that it will evaporate through concussion with a heavenly body. In the once case humanity would be frozen to icicles, in the other it would flicker away as atoms—in each case its destiny would be accomplished; it would disappear, and leave no trace. Such a denouement to the human drama is not unlike the closing scene of the Voluspá. The

spectators are sent disappointed away. What they want to know is not how humanity will come to an end. That its existence will terminate, as that of each individual is doomed to do, they have no doubt. They have had to put up with this inevitable lot as best they may. What they would like to know clearly is the form that human life will take before its end is reached. They want exact and detailed information from those who undertake to unveil the future. How will the different States and peoples develop? Will Europe continue to rule the world, or will the sceptre pass to America, or even to Asia? What will happen to the positive religions, to the form and principles of law? What changes will be undergone by the hierarchy of class, the sense of beauty, the estimation and practice of arts and science? Will the conceptions of good and evil, virtue and vice, honour and disgrace, alter, and how? What new ideas will replace the old? What progress can be expected in the material sphere? What inventions and discoveries will come to make human life easier, richer, and more beautiful?

None of the facts we know, none of the methods at present in existence, are adequate to give a definite answer to these definite questions. Any attempt at detailed forecast would be a mere amplification or continuation of the prophecies of the monk of Lehnin or old Nostradamus. Scientifically it would be worth no more than the fortune-telling on All Hallows' Eve by means of tea or coffee-grounds. A general formula can, however, be laid down as regards technical progress, inventions, and discoveries, as the result of observation of the course of their development.

Discoveries are the outcome of a fundamental psychological trait—curiosity. It compels the observation of phenomena, and attention gives a new account of them. Chance is credited with an influence upon discovery. That influence is very limited. If a man happen to witness any process which makes no great impression on his senses, which he has never observed, which does not connect itself with a series of phenomena that are known to him, he does not notice it. He neglects it. Events that are noisy and remarkable, such as a furious storm, an earthquake, or volcanic eruption—any melodramatic aspect of nature—cannot remain unheeded. They force themselves upon the senses, and exercise a powerful coercion upon the attention. But man fails to observe the regular, silent operation of the chemical, physical, and biological laws, and they make no impression on him until his intellect has been trained and his attention prepared to receive them. Consciousness perceives those sense impressions only which it expects to receive, with which it is familiar, which will fit into a logically constructed system of ideas; others pass over it without leaving any trace, unless their impact is of sufficient force to compel the consciousness to build a new system to contain them. The world around him is constantly addressing itself to man, and telling him all about itself, but he does not understand until he has learned its language word by word. Discoveries follow an iron law of logical succession: no chance can turn them from the straight course. Each prepares the way for the next; it premises the other. It was long known that prisms refract a white light, yet three-cornered glasses were used only to make a playful repetition of a

little rainbow. Fraunhofer first noticed the black lines in the colours made by a sunbeam refracting through a prism. He noticed it because, being an optician, he had, in preparing optical instruments, more occasion for observation of the behaviour of light in a prism than anyone before him had had. His discovery of the black lines premised his knowledge of the prism and of refraction. Bunsen and Kirchoff found black, and later also coloured, lines in the spectrum of an ordinary flame in which certain substances had been burned, and found that these lines corresponded to definite burning substances. Thus arose the chemical analysis of the spectrum, which depended on Fraunhofer's discovery of the black lines in the spectrum of the sun. Huggins observed, from a comparison of various spectra, that the lines of the same substance were shifted towards the violet end of the one spectrum. He remembered Doppler's principle, according to which one and the same set of tone-vibrations sound higher when the vibrating body is near, deeper when it is more remote; and, applying this principle to optics, he interpreted the shifting of the lines to one end of the spectrum to mean that the light was nearer, to the other that it was farther off, and was thus enabled, not only to establish, but to measure, the movements of the fixed stars. This astro-physical discovery was rendered possible by the former discoveries of Bunsen, Kirchoff, and Fraunhofer, and by popular knowledge of the refraction of light by a prism. The history of every scientific discovery shows the same stages, from the crude perceptions of the natural man to an insight of such subtlety that the layman is for the most part unable to compre-

hend how it has been arrived at, and how it is possible to convey it unimpaired in such a manner as to carry irresistible conviction to everyone. Theories and hypotheses are valuable as creating an expectant mental attitude, which directs the attention to the corresponding phenomena, and prepares it to perceive them whenever they appear. On the other hand, they have the disadvantage of diverting the attention from those phenomena that do not correspond, and so far closing the consciousness to the facts that would prove the inaccuracy of the theories and hypotheses themselves. The phenomena that do not fit into the prevalent hypothesis, and therefore go unperceived, owing to the prepossession of those who believe in it, will first be seen and valued by the unprejudiced observer, whose attention is not governed by any hypothesis, and who, therefore, will be able to see the inaccuracy of the one which is accepted and the necessity of replacing it by another. For two generations all chemists were so full of the idea of Stahl's phlogiston that they did not see the contradictory facts operative on every side. After Lavoisier's experiments, it became clear to everyone that phlogiston was an imaginary quantity, and chemists could hardly understand how they had failed to see it to be so.

It can be safely prophesied that man will not cease making discoveries, and that the number and importance of these discoveries will continually increase, since each of them prepares the way for new. But the nature of these discoveries cannot be foreseen by most acute students, even by those to whom the most important scientific results are due. When Heinrich Geissler in-

vented his vacuum tubes, he could not foreshadow Crookes' discovery of the radiation of matter or Röntgen's discovery of the rays that bear his name. When the Curies obtained radium from pitch-blende, they had no idea that Gustav le Bon was to prove radio-activity a fundamental characteristic of that substance, and deduce therefrom such far-reaching consequences as its uninterrupted resolution into ether on the one hand, and its continual formation from ether on the other. When Galvani and Volta discovered electric contact, they had not the faintest conception that their experiments and results would lead, over and above practical inventions, to new views of the unity of energy and of the nature of matter. Certain discoveries, already dimly indicated, are, as a matter of fact, to-day nearly as good as made, since attention is turned to them, and is on the track of all the phenomena leading up to them. The transmutation of metals is only a question of time. The appearance of the moons of Jupiter and Saturn, rotating round their planets in the opposite direction to that followed by all other moons, must surely before long give us an astronomical and cosmological truth that may well establish the theory of Kant and Laplace. But though their shadows of coming knowledge are clearly enough outlined to students of the subjects, they are wholly outside of the range of supposition of the living generation. It is, however, not only by the sum of knowledge already acquired that the way is prepared for new discoveries of increasing importance, but also by psychological constitution of the select few. The capacity for artificial attention develops progressively. The attitude of the consciousness becomes more and

more critical; it is less and less easily satisfied with surface explanations and words that will not stand the test of reality. Observation and thought, freeing themselves more and more from assumption, are less and less transcended by traditional authority. Hypotheses retain their heuristic value while losing their detrimental tendency to blind to certain aspects of a truth and suggest others. All this, however, is only true of the select few. The crowd is less and less capable of sharing the task of observation and the discoveries to which it gives rise, partly because it lacks the preliminary training, which becomes increasingly arduous and lengthy, partly because its curiosity about nature becomes dulled. We have seen, as a fundamental attribute of all living things, this curiosity, which, in the course of development, rises to a thirst for knowledge and understanding. It is their foremost weapon in the struggle for existence. It is thanks to it that it is possible for any living thing to establish itself in its environment and adapt itself to it—that is to say, to avoid its dangers, and profit by such favourable conditions as it affords. But it is long since man lived under natural conditions. The instinct of self-preservation, therefore, no longer compels him to direct his innate curiosity to his natural environment. Between him and it there stands society, of which he is an organized part, and the institutions within whose framework his life is set. Not his natural, but his human, environment is important in the life of civilized man—at any rate, he is far less conscious of the significance of nature in his existence than of the men with whom he lives and on whom he depends. His natural desire for

knowledge is, therefore, directed to the phenomena of society rather than of nature, and therefore the average man is much more likely to increase sociological knowledge than any understanding of the world as a whole.

Each discovery, besides being the mother of new discoveries, generally initiates practical inventions that simplify and enrich life. Discoveries are the fruit of the desire for knowledge that is ever active in the mind of man. Technical inventions, on the other hand, are stimulated by his needs. It is sometimes maintained that inventions create needs. This is mere talking in the air. An invention may give birth to new habits; it may develop and accentuate a need in many cases, but where no needs existed it creates none. Thanks to railways, many people travel nowadays who must otherwise have remained at home; but the desire to travel existed before the railway, although suppressed, except in cases of necessity, because it was extremely difficult to gratify. Gas and electricity have habituated us to a brilliant light unknown before. But the need for illumination at night existed even in the days of torches and oil-lamps, though it could be but poorly satisfied with the existing means. No inventor ever tried to construct a thing for which there was no desire. On the contrary, inventive brains pondered over existing needs until they hit upon something which seemed to them to satisfy these needs better than anything hitherto known, or for the first time. Well-read people are very fond of rummaging through the authors of previous centuries for a more or less clear foreshadowing, or even an exact description, of various inventions not realized until many generations later. In the seventeenth cen-

tury Cyrano de Bergerac gives directions for a flying-machine that contain the germs of the air-balloon as well as the kite. Almost two hundred years before him Leonardo da Vinci first studied the question of human flight, and arrived at solutions not very different from that of to-day. In the eighteenth century Legends Bürgess of Münchhausen describe how the sound in the post-horn had frozen up, and then thawed again, in which, if one has the mind, one may see a humorous suggestion of the phonograph. Galilei recounts, in his "Dialogue," [1] a pleasant tale of an inventor, who said he could transmit conversation between two people three thousand miles distant from one another by means of magnetic needles attuned in a certain way. May not this be an anticipation of the telephone? The answer is, No. This is no anticipation, no preparation for later inventions, but mere wish and desire—the mere expression of a need that has been felt, and for which the imagination weaves visionary gratifications before the reason sees any means of realizing them. Man is

[1] Dialogo di Galileo Galilei Linceo, matematico sopraordinario dello studio di Pisa, etc., dove nei contressi di quattro giornate si dircorre sopra i due massimi sistemi del mondo, Tolemaico e Copernicano. In Fiorenza, Per Gio. Batista Landini, 1632, p. 88: "You remind me of someone who wanted to sell me the secret of conversing with someone two or three thousand miles away by means of a harmony between magnetic needles ('per via di certa simpatia di aghi calamtati!'). I replied that I would gladly purchase it, but would like to see it tried; I should be satisfied with remaining in one room, while he was in another. He replied that the experiment could not be properly seen at such a short distance. Thereupon I dismissed him, with the remark that I could not very well go to Cairo or Moscow to see the experiment, but if he would go thither, I would gladly remain in Venice, and speak with him from there."

conscious of longing for relief from some particular evil, or for the alteration of his condition generally. Above all, he would fain live for ever, freed from death and all sicknesses and infirmities. He would like to keep his youth for ever. He would like to acquire without exertion treasures and delights, the fulfilment of all his wishes. He would like to overcome all the limitations of matter, of the flesh, and of the senses; to be able to see, hear, speak, and feel, without regard to distance or any other obstacle; to traverse seas, mountains, and continents in the twinkling of an eye, and annihilate space with the rapidity of thought. He would like all this, and because he would like it he has always invented fairy-tales, in which the wish is by some miracle realized. The idea of continued existence after death, the resurrection of the body, and the immortality of the soul, has arisen from the same human longing to which are due such inventions as the stories of the well of youth, the conjuring-stick, spells, the cap of darkness, the talisman that makes the body invulnerable, the cloak that enables one to fly through the air; which has inspired the legends of Dædalus and Icarus, of Albert the Great, of Raymond Lully, of the Count of St. Germain, and all the medieval wizards, coiners and devil's allies; which is expressed in the fantastic pictures of the future drawn by authors who imagine a time when men will fly, live under water, walk through mountains, see through walls and rocks, and talk with their fellows at the Antipodes.

Human desire gives inventors their direction; it polarizes their thinking. Their consciousness is wholly devoted to the needs they feel. Every advance in

knowledge must at once assist them in their search for the satisfaction of some old longing, a new and more highly differentiated impulse. They appropriate every scientific discovery as it is made, and endeavour to use it for the practical realization of what seemed impossible dreams. On the other hand, they neglect discoveries that are unconnected with satisfaction of any human need, even though they may revolutionize the conception of the world. On the whole, research sees only what it is prepared to see, and tends generally to discover phenomena that conform to the stage of knowledge at the time, very seldom such as would reverse it. In the same way invention is confined almost exclusively within the range of needs, and hardly ever feels a temptation to contrive a novelty that supplies no felt want. Near Phæstus, in Crete, a slab of clay, 16 centimetres thick, was found, with more than 120 hieroglyphics carved on either side.[1] A stamp with these signs raised upon it must have been pressed into the soft clay, probably several times. In a word, printing —at least block-printing—had been invented in prehistoric Crete. The invention was, in fact, made when the first seal-ring, cylinder, or stone, was engraved from which an unlimited number of impressions could be obtained. Nevertheless, the invention lay disregarded for thousands of years. Why? Because there was no need for a rapid multiplication of writing and images. There were too few educated people, too few able to read, and intercourse was too difficult for there to have been any need of reproductions. But when the need

[1] Communication of M. Salomon Reinach to the Académie des Inscriptions at Paris, *Comptes Rendus*, 1908, p. 478.

for books arose, and the possibility of an extended market for them, the invention of printing followed—the development of a primitive thought and of a process that had been employed for three or four thousand years.

Our knowledge of nature undoubtedly makes it possible for us to-day to create many ingenious contrivances and implements, and transform energy in many ways of which no one has yet thought. But no one will think of them until a need arises and demands satisfaction. It is safe to assert that in the future, as in the past, technical invention will be determined by the needs and desires, if not of all men, at least of a great number of men. Berthelot's prophecy that chemistry will succeed in concentrating in a tiny pill all the carbonaceous and nitrogenous matter needed by the human organism, and substituting it for all animal and vegetable food, is certainly false. The digestive canal, which extends from the mouth to the rectum, with all its apparatus of nerves, glands, and muscles, is designed to receive and assimilate animal and vegetable matter, and acts in man as a permanent cause of physical sensation. It is the source of feelings of lively pleasure and pain, which are apprehended by the consciousness as needs. Berthelot's pill could never satisfy them, and that is why it will never be invented, even as a freak, in any chemical laboratory. On the other hand, there can be no doubt that all the needs of which men are conscious will produce inventions to satisfy them in whole or part. Hugo Michel [1] has collected in his exceedingly interesting little

[1] Hugo Michel, "Introduction to Invention: the Way of Wealth," Berlin, 1906.

book 650 inventions for which a definite need exists to-day. Some are important, others insignificant—the flying-machine (section 75, Sport, Games, Aerial Navigation, and Public Entertainments) side by side with a "hygienic substitute for bread" (section 2, Baking), and "a transparent material for those taking sun-baths" (section 3, Clothing). The author is convinced that all these inventions will be realized within a measurable distance of time, and I share his conviction. But the needs which he leaves out of account are the oldest and most profound in human nature. He does not speak of the desire for eternal youth, eternal life, annihilation of time and space, control over all the forces of nature. It is a subject upon which the level-headed technologist does not enter. But one may venture to predict that this desire, too, will, to some extent, be fulfilled. Death cannot be got rid of, but life may be prolonged beyond the measure of to-day.[1] Old age cannot be wholly obviated, but the limits of youth may be extended by many decades.[2] Disease may be prevented and cured. Rapidity and security of intercourse may increase to such an extent that man will be in a sense ubiquitous in his planet. Air and water will present no obstacles. He will fly as he now drives, and travel under water as he now travels over it. He will learn to use natural forces that to-day do not obey, and even threaten him, and to provide himself with pleasures in all the quarters of the globe. All this will certainly

[1] Jean Finot, "La Philosophie de la Longévité," Paris, 1900, p. 74.

[2] Élie Metchnikoff, "Études sur la nature humaine," Paris, 1903, chap. x., "Introduction à l'étude scientifique de la vieillesse," pp. 294 *et seq.* See also p. 390.

happen, because mankind desires it, and because the whole history of the development of civilization teaches that man has always been successful, if not in satisfying his needs completely, at least in getting as near that satisfaction as possible.

So much may fairly be anticipated as to the future of invention and discovery. Certain cautious conclusions, too, may be ventured as to the general destiny of mankind, so long as we avoid entering into any of the concrete details that mark the course of history—wars, alliances, revolutions, class strife, and the rise and decline of particular States. No one can foresee and foretell when and where an Alexander the Great, Napoleon, or Bismarck will be born, a Battle of Marathon, Actium, Chalons, Hastings, Waterloo, Sadowa fought, a Polish kingdom destroyed and partitioned, an Italy created, an India acquired by England, or a Cuba lost by Spain. To historians such men and events seem of the greatest importance; they seem to them the real content of history. In reality, as I have tried to show, they have no real or permanent effect on the history of humanity. Whether a people groan under oppression or enjoy freedom, whether they are ill or wisely ruled, birth, love, and death go on with uninterrupted regularity, if in different ratios. Needs must be satisfied in a land under foreign dominion as well as in an independent one. Everywhere individuals and classes look after their own interests, so far as they are aware of them, with all the energy they possess; everywhere they become habituated to the ills they can bear or which it would cost them too great an effort to overcome, and rise with desperate resolution against them if they be-

come unendurable. Waves rise and pass over the surface of humanity, sometimes merely ruffling it, sometimes rising mountain high. One can watch a particular wave rising, arching, passing, sinking down again. But that it is not worth this interest, from the point of view either of knowledge or of the destiny of the species, is sufficiently evident to anyone with the smallest insight, since it is no more than a particular instance of the universal law of wavelike movement. The rise and fall, eddies and whirlpools that agitate the surface, never penetrate fully to the depths below; its mightiest convulsions leave them unmoved. Events that may determine the destiny of individuals leave no trace on the life of the species of the whole. In human life everything happens as a consequence of the mode of reaction to external influences, whether natural or human in the origin, which is determined by its organic structure. Since the physical and psychic organism will not alter within a measurable distance of time, its behaviour will always conform to those same laws that have regulated it in the course of its history. One possibility must be left open: after ten thousand years the present climate of the earth may disappear, and be replaced by that prevailing when the human species first appeared. If, as then, the differences between the seasons were to disappear, the ice to melt at the poles and in every glacier, eternal spring to smile even in the highest latitudes, and all over our planet animals and plants to enjoy tropical conditions, then a profound revolution must take place in the existence of man. He would cease to feel most of those needs whose satisfaction is the main purpose of his exertions, such as clothing, dwell-

ings, nourishment, and artificial warmth. Once more, as in the beginning, when he, like all other living things, was the spoilt child of nature, he could live and let live, free from toil and necessity. He would not, of course, even so, return to a condition of primitive barbarism; he would no longer be satisfied to vegetate like a satisfied animal in a well-stored manger; his intellectual needs would remain, and probably, also, the habits acquired during his severe struggle for existence, among them being, no doubt, some tendency to parasitism and to the accumulation of wealth, however greatly modified its form. Institutions and opinions would survive from the day of necessity to that of superfluity—arrangements which, though sensible and practical when originated, would have neither meaning nor use under new conditions. Thrift and providence would still be esteemed as virtues, although, with manna falling every day from heaven, they are an eccentricity, if not a vice. Altruism and citizenship would still be regarded as moral sentiments, although they would have lost their purpose in a world where no one needed the help of his fellow. The strong, select few would still feel atavistic tendencies to rule and command, although there would no longer obtain any biological advantage by power over others. Gradually all these surviving traits would recede, and the primitive instincts atrophied in man would revive. The consciousness, enriched by an ample store of ideas, would acquire a tone of feeling entirely unlike that existing to-day. The State might not dissolve, but its organization would relax. It would have nothing to defend, since there would be no inducement to deeds of violence. The competition for gain between

individuals and for the possession of the earth between nations would cease: war and conquest would cease. If the ambitious still thirsted for renown, they would find it in the intellectual fields of art or science. There would be no political history: only natural history and biography. One danger, indeed, would still threaten a happiness that might seem without a cloud—that of overpopulation. Nature at its most luxuriant can only support a limited number of living things, and boundless demands exhaust her riches. Under primitive conditions the cure for this evil lies in incessant struggle and the extermination of the weak. A high civilization would probably prefer to establish the balance between the provision made by nature and the demands of those who live upon her and maintain it by limiting of the ratio of children to parents.

Short of the contingent return of the climate of Paradise, which, if the learned pundit's [1] remarkable interpretation is correct, is clearly recalled in the Vedanta and Zend Avesta, history will always be what it has been since our knowledge of it—a dial whose hands are moved by the intellectual characteristics and powers of man. The stimuli determining human action are always the same; the form that action takes varies with the knowledge and the instruments at its command. In the future, as in the past, men will be born unequal, but the distance between the select few and the average will constantly lessen. It is hardly conceivable that there should appear to-day in any nation belonging to the white race a man so much above his fellow-country-

[1] Dr. George Biedenknapp, "The North Pole as the Home of a People," Jena, 1906.

men as were the mythical eponymous heroes of the past, who transformed the whole face of life by the civilization that they brought, by the knowledge of the enlightenment they spread, and who, by making law, purifying morals, and establishing religion, left a different race of men from that which they found. In the future this will be even less possible. The time of demigods is over. The initiative to all social progress, all improvement in laws, institutions, and morals, may proceed from a single personality; but realization is the work of numerous groups. A single student may give to scientific discoveries their final elucidation, their successful form, but they are essentially the common work of generations of savants. Only the creations of art and poetry are purely individual achievements, and even here there are innumerable links between one work, one author, and the other, and every poet, every artist, will incorporate in his work the best that has been attained by his predecessors.

The average and the select are brought nearer together, not by the levelling down of the select, but by the levelling up of the average. The capacity for sustained attention develops. The consciousness, constantly extending its scope, is able to grasp a greater number of ideas at one and the same time. As a result, phenomena are more exactly observed, perceptions more accurately combined, and conclusions and judgments more correctly formed. In a word, the content of thought is more thoroughly real, there is less psittacism, less vagueness, less mysticism, less credulity, a more complete adaptation throughout to the given conditions of existence. Whether the association of ideas will be

less stereotyped and the crowd therefore freed from the slavery of custom, and the hatred of all things new, cannot be foreseen. Experience, so far as it goes, teaches that highly civilized men, no less than savages, have great trouble in forming new thought combinations, and avoid it whenever they can. Civilized man is superior in knowledge and judgment to the savage, only because in his plastic and receptive childhood and youth a larger supply of valuable and varied material was available for his mind. His education over, he clings fiercely to what he has learned at school as does the savage to his scanty traditions, and reprobates the new as decidedly as he can do.

It is at the most a difference of a generation. The distance between nations, like that between individuals, will diminish. It is questionable whether there is any difference in the capacity for development possessed by the different nations of the white races. If one appear to be behind the others in civilization, the fact may be a consequence of wars, bad government, or class oppression. The more backward will, no doubt, make up on the more advanced so soon as the causes are removed that have checked their development. There has long been no difference in education and culture between the members of the upper classes of the different peoples of the white race. All are represented by first-rate achievements in science, literature, and art, which show that individual genius exists in all. It is less certain whether the different races are equally endowed. Many anthropologists, including those who are free from race fanaticism and a blind belief in the superiority of the Aryans, contest this, even in the case of the yellow race,

which is the nearest to the white, and which, in the case of the Japanese, has given proofs of creative powers justifying the most brilliant forecasts. One fact remains. Hitherto the white race alone has by its own strength created that genuine civilization which can only rest upon knowledge. Chinese, Japanese, Indians, and Malays have attained to lofty heights in æsthetics and morals, but they have not scaled the highest peak of science. The civilization of America before Columbus may be comparable to the Asiatic, not to the European. Negroes, Redskins, and Australians have not transcended the rudimentary civilization of the Neolithic Age in Europe. The savage races are no longer isolated. They have been violently brought into the vortex of universal intercourse. They must accept the whites as their teachers, whether they will or no. It remains to be seen what they will do in this hard school. If they cannot learn, they will disappear. If, on the other hand, they can assimilate the knowledge and judgments of the white, as has already been done by many Asiatics, some Redskins, and not a few Maoris and Hawaiians, we shall not long be able to speak of higher and lower races, and national pride will have to bend before the fact of the approximate equality of all peoples.

I do not believe that all differences will disappear and all types amalgamate in a comprehensive uniformity. Among the commonplace faces, which will certainly be extraordinarily numerous, some characteristic countenances will always stand out. The perfection of the average will be accompanied by an ever richer differentiation, which will bring sufficient variety into the

aspect of the world. But this differentiation will affect rather the subordinate details of life, and there will be much more conformity than now exists in its essentials—that is to say, the human race will approach the condition of biological equilibrium. Great differences between the individual members of any living species are always a consequence and a sign of some interruption of the natural course of its development. They prove that it has not yet reached its optimum. As the conditions of existence become more favourable, and tend to satisfy organic needs more fully, a greater individual uniformity appears. Originally the human species can have presented very few deviations from the main type, over and above the sub-orders or races into which it was from the first divided by skull formation, stature, and colour of the skin. But when its natural conditions were removed by the change of terrestrial climate, the hard struggle for existence began, and the supermen misused their superiority in an easy parasitism; then individual development began to strain in different directions: the more favoured rose, and the handicapped sank more and more. Thus the differences developed to which history testifies. Gradually that more perfect adaptation to the nature of our planet, which is the biological aspect of civilization, restored over a wide area the conditions under which the species first lived, and included in these conditions is a considerable measure of individual uniformity—at least, within a single primitive race.

The narrowing of the limits within which the variation of the human type takes place has important social and economic results. If an increasing number of men

become capable of sustained attention, and think by perceptions rather than by acoustic signs; if critical reason, the power of logical thought, and a sense of reality become common property, the exploitation of the weak by the strong becomes increasingly difficult, and at last almost impossible. The weak will protect themselves against brute force by closer combination, and the cunning subterfuges of the parasite will lose their efficacy when the crowd has grown clear-sighted enough to see through them. When exploitation ceases to be a remunerative employment for the superman, all the administrative and social institutions, created and developed in order to make that exploitation easy or possible, will gradually crumble away, and finally disappear, without the need of any violent revolution to destroy them. The form of the State will presumably endure, but it will receive a new content. Instead of being a soldier, it will be a judge, a teacher, an architect, and, to some extent, a policeman. In other words, the State will no longer regard it as its first function to maintain, against other nations, the collective egoism developed in its people, as the outcome of the individual egoism of a sovereign and his servants; to wrest advantages from other States by war, or the possibility of war, and to be armed against a similar undertaking on their part. War will become as impossible as is to-day an officially organized attack on the part of a civilized State on the territory of a neighbouring State, for the sake of plundering and carrying off women and cattle. To a man like Count Moltke, steeped to the lips in feudal tradition, eternal peace must appear "a dream, and not a beautiful one." But no one who can rise above his

prejudices and normal habits of thought can doubt that war will fade to the horrible recollection of a barbaric past, when individual citizens are intelligent enough to comprehend that they could not conceivably be worse employed than in leaving their own trades and professions, exposing their health and life to the most appalling dangers, in order, at no advantage to themselves, to destroy the life and goods of others, by way of convincing them of their own superiority. If no one desires to attack, no one need trouble about defence. The necessity of an army ceases, and with it all that picturesque child's play, the "colour of war"—that is to say, gay uniforms, shakos, stripes, and the less innocuous ideas connected with the colours, the position of the officer, and the duty of abject obedience. If there is no army, diplomacy has no longer any function. A court of arbitration will decide such disputes as may arise between nations, respecting the regulation of common rivers and the protection of migrating fishes and birds that travel from one country to another; an international authority, like the International Postal Bureau at Berne, will regulate the routes of the railways of the world, postal and telegraphic communication, common protection against epidemics, and the extradition of criminals. Nothing will be left for emissaries and ambassadors to do, since the relations between nations will be limited to the settlement of technical points which, as concerning several States, and involving matters in which violence and passion have no place, must be settled by a conference of experts.

The State will concentrate the energies of its people on maintaining order and security at home, in grappling

with such problems as ignorance, disease, and vice, which are beyond the capacity of individuals, and in carrying out public works of an extensive and costly character. The course of legal development will show considerable divergence from the Roman conception of property. The principle that no law may be retrospective will not be maintained as obstinately as it is at present. Excessive fortunes will doubtless be attacked with searching questions as to their origin, and rules of equity framed with the greatest subtlety, so as to track the exploitation of the weak in all its most secret windings and retreats, to prevent it by penalties, and ruthlessly deprive those who exercise it of their gains. The purpose of public instruction will not be to bring up a race of pious church-goers, submissive subjects, blindly obedient soldiers, and patriots always ready to shout "Huzza!" but to transmit to the rising generation the established results of the scientific labours of former generations, to develop their critical powers and their feeling for reality, and to raise them to a rational enjoyment of the beauties of nature and art. A generation thus schooled will not lend itself readily to exploitation by force or fraud. It will be intelligent enough to follow its money as it passes into the Exchequer, the Customs-house, the bank, and the joint-stock company, and see what happens to it. Taxes can no longer be squandered on a now superfluous army, nor on the fiscal beneficiaries and sinecurists, maintained because there is latent in the State of to-day the idea that it is really a brilliant and luxurious Court, whose dazzling dignitaries and host of superfluous courtiers serve to exalt the pomp of majesty. Protective duties,

will be as impossible as trusts and cartels, since no one will be prepared to pay toll to individuals or groups in return for no corresponding services. Joint-stock companies will no longer gather in the money of small savers, and then manage it so that the largest possible share goes into the pockets of directors, agents, and other middlemen, and the profits of the rest first remunerate the paid officials, many of whom are quite superfluous, and many overpaid, while the poor shareholders come last, and get a very modest share indeed. No one will part with the fruits of his labour except in return for the satisfaction of some need or an æsthetic pleasure. As the future darkens for the exploiter it brightens for every sort of art and talent. Positive religions have no place in a society in which the sense of reality is strongly developed and the wits of every man are sharpened against the parasite. They are doomed to destruction, however the present constitution of mankind may seem to contradict it. No man of sane intellect will continue to believe in their unproved dogmas or their twaddling transcendentalism. Their failure to induce the many to submit patiently to exploitation will remove their value in the eyes of the parasitic class and the protection afforded them. No one will be inclined to pay for the support of priests when they are recognized on every side to be perfectly useless members of society. Public worship will be peacefully and naturally brought to an end by the State's dissolving its connection with the Churches, and leaving them to themselves. The chapels will be deserted; the clergy will fail to attract recruits, since no young man with a faculty for work and study will wish to dedicate

himself to a profession that neither insures him a livelihood nor carries any respect with it. With the rapid extinction of the priesthood, the religion it serves will soon be a historical memory. The manner in which an enlightened humanity will satisfy the eternal necessity for exaltation, consolation, and the thought of eternity, I have tried to show in my sixth chapter.

Although the select few will no longer be markedly above the average level, there will always be supermen, and they will, even in the future, feel the desire for power and domination over the many. But this atavistic desire to rule will no longer display itself in the historical and now-existing forms: it will no longer be directed to parasitism. It will breed neither conquerors nor dictators. No one will be able to think of setting a crown on his head and founding a dynasty. There may still be some attraction in the position of President or Minister in a community based upon equal citizen rights, but the attraction will not be very powerful. In a matter-of-fact community, which eschews the adventurous and the capricious, and rewards its servants strictly according to the utility of their work, executive power will not afford any special satisfaction to pride, or even to vanity, imagination, or bare greed. Ambition must seek other fields and other ends. The strong, able, and superior man will always seek the first place within his circle—the leadership of a trade group, administrative body, political party, national assembly, or whatever it may be. He will attain it by oratorical gifts, wise counsel, success in business, or determination of character, and find the reward of his exertions and capacity in the reputation, admiration, respect, and per-

sonal influence that cannot be measured in terms of money. The exclusively moral nature of the prizes which ambition can hope to attain will exercise selection among the ambitious. Public recognition will be sought only by two classes—those who are eaten up by personal vanity and those in whom the social conscience is more than commonly developed. That thirst for power, however, which takes its rise in the consciousness of brute strength, in gross selfishness, or vulgar self-interest, and which is simply parasitic in its aim, must, if it cannot be refined or elevated, be suppressed as an evil propensity by a sustained exertion of the will, or else, finding an outlet in crime, it will be tracked down and exterminated by society.

A humanity without adventures, wars or revolutions, without superstition or mysticism, without overweening and dazzling rulers and swarms of blindly devoted servants, an equal society of enlightened, educated, and intelligent human beings, who are all healthy and moderate, who all work, all attain a ripe old age, and all live orderly and contented lives, much in the same manner—such a humanity seems horribly tedious, and would certainly fill the romantic spirits of the present day with a desperate longing for barbarism in its oldest and wildest forms. But the future only appears thus colourless and uniform because our eyes are accustomed to regard the present aspect of humanity as picturesque. The contrast between castle and cottage, luxury and destitution, triumphant exploitation and unreflecting subservience, is interesting, and not repellent, to the man who regards it with the half-conscious idea of rising to an exercise of exploitation himself. Party strife, politi-

cal intrigue, and diplomatic complications make history as exciting as a novel. Supermen can rise above the herd, an inspiring example to the vain and the self-seeking. But all the satisfactions that such a state of things suggests to the imagination are purchased by a great mass of human suffering, which it has been the incessant endeavour of humanity to remove or alleviate. Knowledge, as it widens and deepens, will reduce almost to a vanishing-point the evils that men impose on one another—evils which form the most horrible of their sufferings. The noble pleasure of art and science will become more general and more intense as the intellect and the nervous system become capable of more subtle enjoyment. Acute joy will be provided by the organic impulses and kinæstheses of youth, joy, love, health, and the sense of vigour, which must certainly be richer and more robust when man is free from care, and lives in the lap of luxury, than when he was always restless and often starving. The beauty of the future will be different from that of the present—more natural, more lofty, and more harmonious; and it certainly will not feel any privation in the want of the Sadic alloy of poverty and sorrow, sin and cruelty.

CHAPTER X

THE MEANING OF HISTORY—CONCLUSION

I HAVE now reached the end of my inquiry, and it only remains to take a comprehensive survey of its results.

The hundreds of thousands of volumes of written history that fill so many libraries may amuse the reader by the exciting adventures and varied careers that they describe: they do not contain the smallest amount of scientific knowledge. The historians describe events in a traditional order, and estimate them according to a subjective illusion, attracted by the unusual, and blind to the invisible processes—regular, permanent, and universal—which are alone of real significance.[1] When Claude Henri de St. Simon[2] says, "History down to the middle of the eighteenth century is only the biography of might," and Count Joseph de Maistre says, "For

[1] E. Vacherot ("La science et la conscience," Paris, 1870, p. 92): "An epoch, a race, a nation, or a class, may be studied . . . by considering the actions and movements of great historic figures. . . . The picture is gloriously dramatic, and its æsthetic effect wonderful. But once the mutual connection and interdependence of events has been grasped . . . there is perceived, behind the superficial drama that occupies the front of the stage, at the back of the theatre, an action in progress which, though far less lively, brilliant, and exciting to the ordinary spectator, is infinitely more fascinating to the observer who seeks to penetrate behind the mystery of phenomena."

[2] Claude Henri de St. Simon, "Mémoire sur la Science de l'homme," Paris, 1857.

three centuries history has been an uninterrupted conspiracy against the truth," they suggest limitations for which there is no foundation. Not only up to the middle of the eighteenth century was history merely the biography of might, it has been so since, and is so to this day, in spite of the chapters dealing with sociology and the development of moral ideas that historians nowadays amuse themselves by introducing into their works; not only for three centuries has it been an uninterrupted conspiracy against the truth, it has always been so, ever since the earliest chronicler sat him down to record the events within his knowledge, for the honour and glory of those whom he loved, reverenced, or feared, and the defamation of those whom he hated. History did not begin to be written until the most important and pregnant period of human development was over, and even in the last five or six thousand years it includes but a small portion of events. Although the darkness of the past is but partially illuminated by it, it presents such a connected picture as only the most flawless knowledge could justify.[1] Even in the rare cases where such external processes as are visible to the senses are recorded with tolerable accuracy, the real motive power is over-

[1] Professor Hugo Winckler, in a lecture read before the Asiatic Society in Berlin, November, 1906, gives the results of the excavations at Boghazkoï, where Cheta, the capital of an empire of the same name, was discovered. Nothing is known of Cheta, save that a Theban inscription mentions a treaty between its Emperor and Rameses III. But between 1500 and 1100 B. C. this empire had, in all probability, a profound influence on Judæa and Israel, an influence hitherto unsuspected by historians. In consequence, their interpretation of the history of Judæa has been imperfect, or even entirely false.

looked. This motive operates partly in the consciousness, partly in the subconsciousness, of the actors. In the latter case its workings are hidden from themselves, and even in the former they are inaccessible to the historian. When the historian undertakes to lay bare the spiritual foundations of events, he abandons the firm ground of reality, and soars into the airy regions of imagination. Instead of recording and expounding, he invents, and pretends that his subjective interpretation, guess-work, and invention are the results of actual research. And yet the origin, nature, and reciprocal influence of the elements of tradition on the one hand, and experience on the other, that compose the conscious and subconscious life, remain outside his ken, although to understand human action is impossible without such knowledge. But if, these objections apart, the historian's account is allowed to be always reliable, truthful, and complete; if we admit that he does give a correct description of the men and actions concerned, does estimate correctly the share borne by each individual in any event, and does elucidate fully the motives and intentions of his action, even so his work, after all these admissions have been made, remains vain and negligible, if considered as a contribution to knowledge. The picture it presents displays the external form, but not the inner organs of humanity. Its attention is engrossed by the mutable forms of greatness, every one of which may be exchanged, replaced, increased, diminished, or suppressed, without any effect on the course of history as a whole. It is as though we were to ask a scientist to explain to us the chemical constituents and physical properties of soapy water, and he, as the result of arduous

labour, were only able to present us with an account of the number, size, form, colour, and duration of the soap-bubbles blown by a child at play. We are human, and everything human interests and moves us. Any vivid and convincing account of the destiny of a real human being rouses our eager sympathy, and will always find grateful readers. But history, as the "biography of might," can teach us nothing more than any other true account of an individual life: it makes us acquainted with a personality, while leaving us in profound ignorance of the fate of humanity and its eternal laws. Entertaining literature—nothing more—can be produced by a method of historical writing which regards the concrete event as essential, and treats it accordingly, instead of penetrating through it to an understanding of life of the species as a whole. When history ceases to recount, and begins to count—that is to say, when, instead of lingering over the visible individual bearers and makers of history—the picturesque soap-bubbles, as it were, of individual events—it devotes its attention to studying the forms, conditions, and modifications of the uneventful daily existence of average humanity, then, and not till then, can it cease to be an art, a mongrel poetry, and rise to the rank of a science. But then it is no longer history in the customary sense: it becomes anthropology, ethnography, or sociology reinforced by biology, psychology, and statistics.

The philosophy of history at least claims a higher point of view. It includes in its survey the whole course of human development, and seeks to know its origin, course, and goal. It values concrete personalities only

in so far as they seem to throw light upon the answer to the more general question. Such, at least, is its theoretical programme. But we have seen how imperfectly it has hitherto been fulfilled. It is not in any spirit of interrogation, in any modest desire to learn what it can teach, that it approaches human life, but with the arrogant spirit of command, and opinions already formed. These it seeks to have confirmed by question-begging inquiry and the suppression of any answers that do not fit in. Ernst Mach speaks somewhere of the "sciences of deceit, which have been formed for the purpose of maintaining views that are a survival of the primitive condition of mankind." The type of "these sciences of deceit" is the philosophy of history, in the customary aphoristic and deductive form, in which it includes every vision, every chimera, and every superstition characteristic of the theology and metaphysics of the day. It attributes intentions to the actions of historical personages which they never had, invents an order of events of its own creation, and ascribes a goal of human development that has no existence outside an imagination obsessed by anthropomorphic ideas. Were it possible for the *à priori* philosophy of history to reflect upon itself, and realize the real nature of the task before it, it would shrink back, appalled by the immensity of its undertaking and the inadequacy of its methods. The impulse in which it originates is a longing to comprehend the riddle of the universe. Man seeks to know the significance of the universe and of his part in it—why he was born, why he suffers; why he must die; why he has been endowed with the awful privilege of reason, what will become of the heavenly spark housed in his

perishing earthly body, why, in the brief span of his life upon earth, he aspires and struggles, thinks and inquires, loves, longs, and suffers. And, because his humanity is clipped in the limits of human existence, he naturally exaggerates the importance of his species in the universe. He thinks anthropomorphically, and follows his will-o'-the-wisp, without any gleam of scientific mistrust, to the conviction that the meaning of the universe must be revealed through humanity, if not through any individual human being. He believes that the species as a whole has a consciousness of its vocation that transcends the consciousness of the individual man, and that it is only necessary to take a sufficiently wide and penetrating survey of the life of the species to recognize its working and the end towards which it strives, and to be enlightened as to the nature of that task in which the individual is engaged without being aware of it. But the answer given by human history to such questions of eternity is the same as that given by the history of every other species. We can get as near or nearer to a solution of the riddle of the universe by looking up to the starry heaven or down the shaft of a coal-mine as by the most impassioned study of archives and libraries. The search for a purpose in human events, and in the development of peoples and States, involves the silent assumption that history has such a purpose. It can only have a purpose if someone outside of humanity, independently of the consciousness and open will, has set that purpose before it, and ceaselessly urges them to struggle towards it. This someone can only be a Being endowed with intelligence and will, omnipotent and eternal, and a Being with such attributes is the

God of the theologians. Whenever the philosophy of history includes a transcendental theology, it is a form of religion, and arrives by a superfluous historical circuit at the point of view of the catechism. Faith in God and His dominion on the earth does not require the support of history to strengthen its conviction of the being and attributes of God, and the stability of a world-order that came from God and returns to Him. And nothing in the course of history can create faith in God where it is absent. If the deductive philosophy of history is not theology, it has no meaning; if it is, it is superfluous.

When history is approached without preconceived opinions, in the sole desire to know; when its course is regarded with scientific detachment, and no theological assumptions are introduced, the resulting views have nothing in common with the teachings of philosophy of history in its customary form.

No single historical event, when truthfully presented without any intentional interpolations, permits the assumption of a purpose towards which the efforts of historical actors are ignorantly directed, and which, remaining unsuspected by their short-sighted simplicity, is first revealed to an astonished posterity. Nothing in history justifies the assertion that any higher intelligence is pursuing plans in whose accomplishment unsuspecting humanity is a passive instrument. Nowhere is there revealed any transcendent Finality. On the contrary, every act carried through by men can be referred to a cause that is, as a rule, known, or, if unconscious, can easily be discovered. Causality, not teleology, is the law of history; a highly complex causality, certainly,

which brings to bear upon every man, at every moment of his life, the whole past and present of our species: the present by the necessities of the struggle for existence, and by the relations between stronger and weaker, fellow-workers and competitors; the past by means of the institutions it has created, inherited modes of thought, standards of value, and forms of feeling. If the causes of all human action be reduced to their simplest terms, it would finally appear that the will of any individual is determined solely by the needs that appear in the consciousness as feelings of pain. As long as he lives man seeks to escape pain, and all his efforts are directed to this one purpose. This highly generalized psychological formula is unconditionally valid in every instance, even where a man appears to do something that, instead of removing or alleviating a pain, actually causes him pain in the first instance. In such cases he takes one pain to avoid another, that seems to him more severe, however it may be estimated by the outsider, who is exempt from it. A slave will work for his master till he drops down with fatigue, without any hope of reward or freedom, because the idea of the punishment for disobedience—stripes, mutilation, or even death—is more painful to him than the toil of work, by which he escapes from it. The peaceful man who loves his wife will go to war and run into the most deadly peril, because disobedience to the command of the State, failure to answer the call of patriotism and honour, are to him evils more dreadful than death. The habit of submission to traditional notions of duty and virtue has been made, by education, so much a part of the intellectual mechanism of the civilized man, and

controls his thoughts and feelings so completely, that any deviation from it would cause him such unendurable pain that wounds and death would seem a lesser evil in comparison. A mere desire for pleasure is not the cause of action unless it be so violent as to be felt as a tormenting restlessness, excitement, and longing—that is, as a sharp feeling of pain. It cannot even be said that man is so constituted organically that he is only stirred to action by the desire for sugar or the fear of the whip. Really, the whip is the sole stimulus; the sugar only becomes one when it stirs a desire that is so strong that it acts as a whip. Only on such an interpretation can either Hedonism or Eudæmonism claim to afford an accurate explanation of human action. Man is not always seeking the blue bird of happiness. He is always fleeing from pain. He does not set his footsteps towards a visionary Jerusalem—the fulfilment of the joy and happiness he desires so ardently. He flees ever from haunts of pain.

Every historical event, without any exception, can be referred to a need—that is, in the last resort, to a feeling of pain. The purpose of these feelings of discomfort is the preservation of life, and they are incomprehensible without the assumption of a life force, a desire, inherent in every living thing, to maintain itself against destruction and annihilation. Only the assumption of a life force explains why the living creature marks with pain every perception of a state that could harm or endanger it, and is thereby impelled to exert himself to escape it. It is not quite correct to say that harms are marked by pain, for that gives the appearance of a duality, a separation of the perception and the pain; a

relation as between cause and effect, the thing accompanied and the accompaniment. As a matter of fact, the perception of harm and the pain are identical. They are a single organic state. Pain is the subjective side of harm. Harm is not the cause of pain: it is pain. It appears as pain in the consciousness, and operates in it to cause acts of will directed to protection; outside of it to cause reflex action. And as everything harmful to life appears in the consciousness as pain itself, so the unharmed movement of life appears in the consciousness as pleasure in itself, in reality as the only pleasure of which man is capable, and which he knows—a pain that may vary in intensity but not in nature. So we arrive at the knowledge that all the actions of men, whether individually or in groups, classes, and nations, are defensive of pleasure—that is, of life—and protective against pain—that is, dangers and harms to life—and that the whole course of history is the expression of one underlying fact—the will of man and of mankind to live and to make every exertion to maintain life in the midst of hostile nature. This does not distinguish man from other living things—the lowest and the highest, the vegetable and the animal. Every organism desires to last, and defends itself against destruction with all the strength that in it is. The life force is seemingly inseparable from life, and the whole activity of every living thing is directed to the satisfaction of its necessities, which in the lowest stage are tropisms, conditioned by chemical and physical laws, and, with a higher development, are consciously realized as needs. History, rightly seen and interpreted, instead of separating the human species from the chain of all other

living species on the earth, knits them all together, and proves in its own way the unity of all life.

It has become more difficult for the human species to satisfy its needs than for any that lived on earth before it, or lives there now beside it. It arose between two Ice Ages, at a time when our planet offered from pole to pole the most favourable conditions of existence for a race of beings who lived on plants, were almost or quite hairless, needed the sun and disliked the wet, and followed a happy course of development in its tropical or subtropical paradises, until a subsequent Ice Age came upon it—not upon it alone, but upon all then living things. Many animal and plant species perished; others withdrew to a narrow tropical zone, and remained there, forfeiting their lives if they left their prison. Others struggled against the new hostility of nature, and adapted themselves to its harsh conditions. Of these was the human race. Instead of fading away before the frozen breath of the murderous climate of the Pole, or fleeing for refuge to a tropical region to which no cold could penetrate, it adapted itself to altered circumstances—not, like the other dwellers on the earth, by organic changes, but by the capacity of its mind to invent artificial arrangements, which procured for it those conditions of existence no longer provided by nature.

This artificial adaptation by means of discoveries has never ceased. The longer it lasts, the more energetic and effective does it become. It is the real content of human history, not visible on the surface, but occupying the depths. It has always been carried on according to the law of least effort, and has therefore always moved along the line of least resistance. This method

produced one peculiar result. The stronger individuals caused the weaker to provide them with the favourable conditions of existence indispensable to them. The resistance of their fellows was less in proportion than the resistance of nature. Less effort was involved in robbing men of the fruits of their labour than in wresting from nature warmth, dryness, nourishment, and comfortable rest. Parasitism proved by experience to be the easiest form of adaptation. As far back as historical tradition goes the strong are found directing their efforts in this manner. This parasitism on the part of the strong is the object—obvious or occult, direct or indirect—of almost all the institutions that have arisen in the course of centuries, and represent the framework, even the substance, of civilization. Superior individuals always devoted their best efforts to the direct exploitation of those less highly gifted of the average people, and also to their education in habits of thought and feeling which would lead them not only to see no violence or injustice in the parasitism to which they were subjected, but even to feel themselves so distinguished by it that they worked with heart and soul for those that exploited them, and felt a moral glow, a sense of pride, in being permitted to sacrifice themselves. It was with positive pleasure that they placed all their capacities at the service of these plunderers, and competed with one another to make inventions and discoveries with a view to their advantage. Thus, by the exercise of their own brains, they made their exploitation easier, less dangerous, more effective and productive. The only return, at first hoped and longed for, then besought, and finally demanded, by the aver-

age from the super man was to be left undisturbed in his habits, and not to be expected to form any personal judgments or resolutions, any new adaptations, such as were beyond his power. He asked for the maintenance of order about him, and protection for his enjoyment of the few rights left him by the State.

Externally, then, history is a melodrama on the theme of parasitism, characterized by scenes that are exciting or dull, as the case may be, and many a sudden stage-trick. A strong man, called a hero by the weak, who slavishly admire him, snatches dominion over some or many—perhaps over a whole nation or nations. He or his successors extend this power by means of raids into foreign territory and by conquests, and endeavour by the splendour of the court and occasional wars to maintain their position by rousing fear and awe. The warriors and servants of the ruler form a class apart, which endeavours, in its turn, to secure the privilege of exploiting the rest of the people. If this class presses its claims too far, or if any section of the exploited population develops a strong economic position, then, when this latter section becomes conscious of its strength, it will endeavour to break the power of the others, to cast them down from their privileged position, and occupy it in their stead, unless they are clever enough to take into their own ranks those whose attack they can no longer resist. In this incessant warfare between individuals for the supreme power, between classes for internal domination, and between nations for the possession of the earth and its fruits, the State, Government, trade, industry, and law take their rise and perfect themselves,

each the outcome of the other, each conditioned by the other, and all serving but as weapons in the warfare. But while wars and treaties, revolution and reaction, party strife, crisis, and compromise, are the characteristic expression of the efforts made by the parasitic selfishness of individuals and communities to attain the most effective possible form of exploitation, and of the resistance offered by those who are sacrificed to them, the constant changes they effect are changes on the surface. Beneath the turbulent waves of the internal and external politics of States, the laborious task of adaptation is always going on, quietly and regularly, by means of a more and more penetrating knowledge of nature, which is of advantage to the species as a whole, including the average man, and also those who are handicapped by nature. In this it is unlike the easy adaptation carried out by the strong, for the advantage of a select few specially favoured organisms, by means of parasitism. The discoveries of keen observers and capable interpreters permit a more and more penetrating insight into the operations, if not into the nature, of the forces of the universe. Able or intelligent inventors incorporate each new piece of knowledge in a form in which it can be of use in satisfying the needs of which humanity, or a portion of it, has become conscious. Better understanding of nature gradually educates the human mind, teaches it to distinguish error from truth, to think logically, to form judgments by careful combination of cause and effect, strengthens the attention, develops the sense of reality, and limits man's tendency to prefer words to views and ideas of his own. When the reason is thus educated by a knowledge of nature,

the power of symbols and phrases over it is at an end. Men lose their superstitious belief in portentous formulæ and signs; they test the accuracy of assertions made to them, and estimate threats by the degree to which they are capable of being realized. All this makes their exploitation more difficult. It can no longer be accomplished by force, since the average people, when combined, are fully competent to forecast and meet strength by strength. It cannot be accomplished by craft, since the average people are capable of seeing through it. Parasitism, becoming more troublesome and less productive with every advance in the enlightenment of the crowd, ceases to offer to the select few the easiest method of adaptation. Then the law of least effort determines them to make the same efforts as the average persons do in order to obtain the satisfaction of their needs, whether from nature or by exchange with their fellows —an exchange more profitable in their case, thanks to their superiority. This development of civilization is paralleled by the development of morality. Moral conceptions undergo transformation with the change in the relation between the select few and the average many, with the rising self-respect of the ordinary man who does not aspire to domination, and with the increased value assigned to personality, even in the case of him not specially endowed. The ethics of parasitism, whose standard of value, as applied to thought and actions, is their tendency to be beneficial or detrimental to those engaged in exploitation, to the men of overwhelming force, to the privileged class, to the State, are gradually ousted, and their place taken by the ethics of sovereign personality, for which good is that which assists the con-

quest of nature by man, and evil that which assists the conquest of man by man.

Parasitism is not the sole result of the law of least effort in the struggle for existence in the midst of hostile nature: it has also produced illusion. No living form can preserve itself unless it is at home in nature, and learns to avoid what is harmful, and discover what is advantageous to it there. The development and differentiation of its organs is relative to this capacity. In proportion as its needs are manifold and complex, it must have a delicate and many-sided faculty of orientation. In men, as in all other animals, the seat of this faculty is the nervous system, with the brain as its centre. The chemistry of the body and its movements, and, to a large extent, its development, circulation, and nutrition, are also controlled by this supremely important organ, whose highest function—the psychic—has arisen and been developed throughout by the necessity of self-preservation. Compulsory adaptation to nature strengthened memory, the primitive characteristic of living matter, fixed the attention; created and perpetuated the mechanism of the association of ideas; and imposed the law of causality on thought. The functions of attention, the association of ideas and causal thinking, are obviously determined by one and the same object: to translate the sense impressions, when perceived, into ideas and judgments in such a manner that the consciousness should receive with all possible speed and the least possible exertion as accurate a picture as possible of its environment, should form as correct as possible a concept of the connection of phenomena, and foresee with the greatest possible certainty the changes, near

and remote, likely to occur and prove in any way important to the organism; so that, estimating their value, both qualitative and quantitative, it may focus the organism in the most favourable possible way. To form a picture of the universe, as closely in touch with reality as the formation and functioning of the sense and perceptive organs permit, is a psychic task of the most laborious description: knowledge is only acquired by arduous effort. It is incomparably less difficult to give full rein to the imagination, to allow the thoughts to wander at will, as free and light as air, to indulge in reveries and day-dreams, than to sustain and fix the attention, form ideas from pure perception, without any subjective interpolation whatsoever; gather up from the memory the perceptions already formed into ideas, and to build up judgments from them; finally to test with due severity the causal connection and mutual interdependence of the terms of every conclusion. The associations that are frequent and habitual organize themselves, and summon each other automatically into the consciousness. It is filled with a whirling crowd of ideas that are drawn from the memory by the playful mechanism of the organized associations, instead of being composed of immediate perceptions which have been tested. These ideas, then, group and combine kaleidoscopically. They dart like will-o'-the-wisps through the consciousness, and disappear again into obscurity. And all this takes place without the will at any moment intervening to control the vanishing dance, or to introduce any order into it, and without the thinking Ego being conscious of any sort of effort. Out of these nebulous elements, which never develop to rational thoughts, the dominant emo-

tion of the moment creates subjective images like the figures of Chladni formed by the vibrations that act upon thin plates of glass—images whose origin prevents them from corresponding in any way to reality. Yet at the beginning of civilization, and even to-day in many cases, men were satisfied to use their brains in this way, because it required so much less effort than the way to knowledge. The automatic play of association gave them a view of the world that, though false in every feature, gave them pleasure because it harmonized with their feelings and inclinations. "Side by side with the real world," said Goethe, "there is a world of illusion more powerful than it is, and in it dwell the majority of men." Men built up this world of illusion for themselves first by means of incomplete, inattentive observation, which was satisfied with the most casual sense impressions, and falsified even them by arbitrary interpolations and preposterous interpretations; then by presentment or intuition, which is no more than a formless muddle of vague recollections, whose origin in the senses is forgotten; by the use of analogy in identifying things which are essentially different because of certain partial resemblances; and by imagination, which, working by means of automatic associationism, has emancipated itself almost completely from the law of causality.

In this world of illusion men were as comfortable as in the warm huts inside which the cold, storm, and rain without went unobserved. There everything had a rational meaning. There they found the answer to all the questions suggested by fear or curiosity—an assuagement for all trouble and unrest, a comfort for every sorrow, a solution to every riddle. Sickness? The

tormenting of an invisible, sometimes of a visible, enemy, who only had to be driven or cajoled away, and one would be well. Death? A mere appearance, the reality being eternal life in unknown but, for the good and favoured, most glorious regions. The world? A round plate resting upon the sea, covered with a bell-glass of blue crystal. Its origin? its end? Great artists, the Gods, have created it, rule over it, and will one day destroy it. Happiness? A gift that can be obtained from these Gods, if one can win or purchase their favour by submissive prayer and sacrifices. These examples suffice. For an exhaustive description of the world of illusion with which men have surrounded themselves, one would have to take in the whole range of mythology, all fabulous cosmogonies, theology, and also all metaphysical systems.

In the long-run, however, Illusionism was no more successful as a means of adaptation than Parasitism. The cold blast of reality pierced the world of illusion, and laid waste its fair order. Magic formulæ, incantations, and the burning of witches and wizards, did not heal disease. Too often prayer and sacrifice failed to avert evil from individuals and communities. Amulets did not avail in battle to avert the deadly stroke. "Sator areto tenet opera rotas" did not succeed in extinguishing conflagrations. No incantations were of any use against plague and famine. The nullity of all the methods of illusion inexorably compelled men to seek elsewhere. Its explanations had to be abandoned in the face of innumerable phenomena that could not be overlooked. In fear and trembling, at first isolated individuals, then more and more, were compelled by their sense

of reality to come out of their cherished world of illusion, and feel their way carefully, slowly, step by step, into the real world. It was trackless and incomprehensible, with sharp corners everywhere that bruised the feet, blocks and crevasses over which they fell. But gradually they began to learn their way about, and, so soon as some sort of path was made, the explorers had fairly solid ground under their feet. And those who studied the real world arrived at positive results, such as the world of illusion never had, and never could have afforded. The vast majority continued to be wrapped up in the illusions of their own weaving that they held for the real world. Nothing shielded them from the danger of losing all touch with the world of reality, and being exposed defenceless to the injustice of nature, like the dreamers and sleepers on whom the enemy descends in the night, except the incessant watchfulness of the sentries who undertook to guard and to defend them. These were the small minority, those who busied themselves with observation, research, reflection, and experiment. To them the world owes its discoveries, its inventions, and its knowledge. Thanks to the devoted labours of this minority, the great majority could safely prolong their pleasant sojourn in the land of illusion, though they are more and more effectually being prevented from acting under the sway of their illusions, and repeating, on a larger scale, such aberrations as the Crusades, the flagellation movement, the persecution of heretics, and burning of witches, or the religious wars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

But even the apostle of reality has not wholly re-

nounced his illusions. Even the scientist, accustomed to observe most carefully and test most severely the contents of his consciousness—even he feels an atavistic home-sickness for the world of illusion, and is drawn towards it by irresistible longing. But there is this difference between him and the man who has never awakened to his illusions: he knows the play of his imagination for what it is, even while he delights in it, and never for a moment confuses it with real ideas and judgments. The world of illusion, that the undeveloped mind regards as the whole world, is restricted by the critical thinker to the sphere of art, which is to him a joy and a luxury with which he cannot dispense. In art he recovers that free play of the imagination that, until recent times, formed the sole activity of the human brain. Once more, untrammelled by the harsh negations of reality, he is master of a world which he can build up, and furnish with his own ideas, peopling it with the embodiments of his longing for beauty, youth, strength, and every kind of perfection, banishing from it everything hateful and vulgar, everything evil, repulsive, or repellent, all pain and all sorrow, and committing its government to justice, gentleness, and love. Art is governed by man's inclinations and impulses, which find there the unbounded satisfaction denied them in reality. There man is not obliged to adapt himself with pain and trouble to nature; instead, nature—a nature of his own invention—adapts itself to all his needs and whims, and leaves no one of his wishes unfulfilled. The matter-of-fact necessity of adapting himself to his environment has compelled man to raise his thought to knowledge by submitting it to stern discipline, and to renounce the

pleasures of illusion, which, though facile and flattering, are sterile. In art he seeks his revenge on reality.

An answer to the questions of eternity has been hoped for from history. In vain: it contains none. The moving picture of human life, present as well as past, holds up to us the same inexplicable facts as does the universe itself. These facts are the very existence of the world, the phenomenon of life and consciousness. They are given: we must accept and make the best of them, whether we comprehend them, whether we give a rational explanation of them or no. We see that the world exists; that at a given moment in the world our planet arose, and became the stage of the life-process; that in the course of the development of life upon earth a being appeared with a relatively larger brain than any hitherto known, man; that the human species has the desire and the capacity to maintain itself under very unfavourable circumstances. So much we see. But history can no more explain it than chemistry or astronomy. How was consciousness all at once ignited by the combination of matter, and how did it develop itself steadily to knowledge? How are the influences of nature on living matter—*i.e.,* energy, movement, oscillation—translated into idea? Why has man and no other living species on the earth attained to intellectual development? To what purpose is this long series of birth and death, the vast effort involved in the attainment of knowledge, ceaseless struggles and sorrows, if annihilation, the disappearance without a trace of humanity, and perhaps of the earth itself, be the end of it all? It is vain to ponder the annals of mankind, and summon up, so far as we are able, men

and events from the vasty deeps of past centuries. We can obtain no light on what we long to know.

We must cease to regard humanity from the point of view of eternity. It dwindles else before our eyes to an almost invisible speck, without permanence, significance, or aim, the contemplation of which leaves us utterly humiliated, broken, and dispirited. "Sub specie æternitates" we are nought; we must regard ourselves "sub specie sæculi" if the spectacle is to be worth the trouble. It is hopeless to ask the purpose of humanity and its existence—as hopeless as to ask the purpose of Sirius, the Milky Way, or the comets. At least we can see some sort of subjective purpose in the life of the individual: he lives, and wishes to live, because life is pleasant to him; he lives, and will live, because life gives him pleasure, is pleasure. He has no doubts of this; only in sickness and old age—that is to say, when the energy of life is waning—is he overcome by a shrinking feeling of emptiness and aimlessness, of *tædium vitæ*. So long as he is filled with life even his reason accepts the word of the Gospel: "Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof." His happiest hours and his fairest experiences come to him through a world of illusion of his own creation, through religion, fairy-tales and superstitions, through art. In his thirst for permanence, in his devouring desire for a future, he longs for a goal of aspiration which may open a wide prospect before him, he creates for himself an ideal transcending the hours of his earthly pilgrimage and the limits of his own existence, and in directing himself to it is comforted by a new idea of his own value and his own far-reaching significance. But is there one out of all the ideals to

which the noblest and ablest of men have aspired which can stand the cold examination of knowledge? Only one—the ideal of goodness and of selfless love. To add no inevitable touch of cruelty to the inexorable evils with which nature scourges man, but, within the limits of their strength, to lessen the sum of human suffering—this is the ideal towards which the most perfect men our species has known have aspired, which they have tried to realize, which they have felt to be noble and high enough to inspire and recompense them. It is an ideal that is still far from being realized. It may suffice us for a long time to come. It can yet make life worth living to many, and those the best among us.

Thus, behind all appearances and all delusions, we find the real meaning of history to be the manifestation of the life force in mankind. This manifestation passes through successive forms—parasitism, illusion, and knowledge—in an ascending scale of human adaptation to nature. Any other meaning is not deduced from history but introduced into it.

THE END

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